

Online first

International Organisations Research Journal, 2022, vol. 17, no 2, pp.

Original article

doi:10.17323/1996-7845-2022-02-08

The UN-AU Partnership in Peacekeeping: Tendencies and Problems¹

S. Bokeriya

Svetlana Bokeriya — PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Theory and History of International Relations, Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (RUDN University); 10 Miklukho-Maklaya Str., Moscow, 117198, Russian Federation; E-mail: bokeria_sa@pfur.ru

Abstract

A strong partnership between the United Nations (UN) and the African Union (AU) is essential to achieving strategic convergence and coherence as well as effective solutions to complex peace and security challenges in Africa. In this article, the author examines the UN-AU peacekeeping nexus through research on peacekeeping operations in Africa and analyzes the key challenges in the UN-AU partnership for peacekeeping, including: the lack of clear regulation of actions in conflict despite attempts to develop common approaches to peacekeeping by the UN and the AU; the necessity of establishing equal, full and constructive participation of women in the peacekeeping process; and the problems in the relationship between the UN Security Council (UNSC) and the Peace and Security Council of the AU.

The main objective of this article is to analyze the institutional structure of the African peace and security architecture, the evolution of the UN-AU partnership through the implementation of joint peacekeeping missions, and the challenges to their cooperation, as well as to assess the effectiveness of UN-AU cooperation.

Based on a structural analysis of the African security architecture, quantitative methods of assessment, and comparative analysis of the UN and the AU statistics on partnership peacekeeping, as well as on women's participation in peacekeeping operations in Africa from 2003 to 2019, and the voting patterns of the A3 (Niger, South Africa and Tunisia) countries to UNSC resolutions on African peacekeeping, the author concludes that there is a direct correlation between the deteriorating security situation in Africa and the level of strategic partnership between the UN and the AU, and that, in the long term, the priority will be to help national governments to prevent the causes of conflicts, which will make it possible to take into account the local specificities of African states in resolving and preventing conflicts.

Keywords: UN-African Union Nexus; Peace and Security; Peacekeeping Operation; Gender Balancing; Security Council; Conflict Prevention; A3

For citation: Bokeriya S. (2022) The UN-AU Partnership in Peacekeeping: Tendencies and Problems. *International Organisations Research Journal*, vol. 17, no 2, pp. (in English). doi:10.17323/1996-7845-2022-02-08

Introduction

¹ This article was submitted 29 December 2021

The strong interaction between the United Nations (UN) and the African Union (AU) is due not only to the fact that these organizations are the key structures implementing peacekeeping operations to maintain peace and security in Africa, but also to the fact that this area of work has become a priority for both organizations. The strategic partnership between the UN and the AU began in 2002, with the creation of the AU. Despite the established bilateral relations between the organizations and their participants, the process of joint actions for peacekeeping missions encounters certain difficulties both at the strategic (difficulties in developing political strategies, agreeing on joint projects, and lack of funding) and the operational levels (timely resource provision and improving the professionalism of military and civilian personnel).

In addition, in the context of changing conflict dynamics, there are shortcomings in the implementation of multilateral peacekeeping operations through the AU, the UN, the European Union (EU), and regional economic communities (RECs), associated with the lack of coordinated actions and consensus on the choice of strategy among all participants in the peaceful settlement of crises, as well as growing criticism of the partnership between the UN and the AU [Forti, Singh, 2019], which impedes a joint response to conflicts in a multivector format.

Many studies are devoted to the key issues of interaction between the UN and the AU in the field of peacekeeping, the peculiarities of the African peace and security architecture (APSA), and the implementation of peacekeeping operations in Africa. In particular, the main literature can be divided into four groups. First, most conflicts on the African continent have deep ethno-political roots, so it is quite difficult to resolve them with standard tools [Denisova, 2015; Romadan, Shagalov, 2015]. Second, despite the successes of collective missions and achievements in the field of strategic partnership between the UN and the AU [de Coning, 2019; Sidorova, 2021], as well as in certain areas, including mediation, the Silencing the Guns initiative, and the increasing role of women in African peacekeeping [Bokeriya, 2021b], the interaction between the UN and the AU is characterized by tension, unequal diplomatic potential, and varying degrees of political influence [Larionova, 2016], as well as insufficiently effective cooperation in the field of peacebuilding and post-conflict regulation [Forti, Singh, 2019; Williams, Boutellis, 2014], which impedes the effective implementation of strategies for maintaining peace and security in conflict hotbeds in Africa.

Third, there are disagreements among the UN and AU member states on the development of collective strategies to resolve current and emerging conflicts, for example, the situations in Mali and Libya [Tetryuk, Chizhevsky, 2014].

Fourth, it is also worth noting the studies on collective missions of the UN and the AU, as well as the distribution of responsibility in the event of misconduct by regional peacekeeping forces [Pergantis, 2015; Kostelyanets et al., 2017].

The main purpose of this article is to identify the degree of influence of the UN-AU partnership on the security situation in Africa, as well as to assess the effectiveness of the mechanisms and instruments of that partnership in the field of maintaining peace and security in Africa from 2003–19.

Structural Analysis of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA)

The problem of ensuring peace and security in African states became particularly acute in the 1990s and early 2000s, because by that time socio-political and economic problems on the African continent, including popular dissatisfaction with the policies of the authorities, high levels of poverty, ethnic, religious, and political disagreements, territorial disputes, and struggles for natural resources, began to transform into armed conflicts of various intensity.

Due to the complexity of conflicts in Africa and the uniqueness of the situation in each conflict-affected state, the UN's reaction to African crises was delayed, which caused discontent on the part of stakeholders. This led African leaders to establish a mechanism within the African Union to address threats to peace and security in a timely and adequate manner. Established in 2003, based on the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) [AU, n.d.] signed in Durban in 2002 by 53 African heads of state, APSA consolidated organizations, systems, and principles for the prevention and resolution of conflict situations on the continent, as well as for the purpose of post-conflict regulation. The key structure of APSA is the Peace and Security Council [AU, 2002], which carries out joint activities with the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS), the Peace and Security Department of the Commission of the African Union, the African Standby Force (ASF), the Panel of the Wise (POW), and the Peace Fund, which is responsible for financing the AU's activities to ensure peace and security on the continent.

The range of tasks of APSA includes not only early warning of conflicts and their prevention, but also the conduct of operations for peacekeeping, peacemaking, and humanitarian operations, post-conflict settlement, promotion of democracy, good governance, and respect for human rights, and work with the consequences of natural disasters.

The PSC serves as a coordinating centre between the AU and the regional economic communities, as well as other regional structures responsible for conflict prevention and resolution. According to the protocol, the PSC cooperates in this area with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, the Pan-African Parliament, the UN, civil society organizations, and other international partners. The PSC consists of 15 states, which are elected on a regional basis by the AU Executive Council at the level of foreign ministers of the participating countries. The principle of formation of the PSC is as follows: two countries from North Africa, three from Eastern, Central, and Southern Africa, four from Western Africa. Five members of the Council are elected for three years, the remaining 10, for two.

Among the tasks of the PSC are strengthening peace, security, and stability in Africa, coordinating the efforts of the countries of the continent to combat international terrorism, creating conditions for sustainable development, preventing and resolving conflicts, participating in post-conflict settlement, preventing the threat of re-escalation of conflict, and implementing the common defence policy of the African Union, among others.

The implementation of the decisions taken by the PSC is carried out by the Department of Peace and Security of the AU Commission, which is responsible for ensuring peace, security, and stability on the African continent through the management of APSA. The department is entrusted with the important mission of developing and implementing a common security policy for Africa, as well as protecting pan-African interests in the field of defence and security, monitoring compliance with and promoting the implementation of peace treaties, and preparing a regulatory framework for interference in the affairs of member states in accordance

with the provisions of the constitutive act of the AU. Moreover, the Department of Peace and Security of the AU Commission ensures interaction with the UN and African regional organizations and is responsible for the management of peacekeeping operations.

According to the Constitutive Act of the African Union, in the event of compelling reasons related to war crimes, genocide, or crimes against humanity, military interference in the internal affairs of the participating countries is permitted. However, in accordance with the norms established in the UN Charter, regional organizations, such as the African Union, can apply measures of influence only after consideration of this issue in the UN Security Council. From a legal point of view, paragraph four of the Constitutive Act of the African Union does not comply with Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, which may lead to contradictions between the two organizations in the future.

For rapid response to crisis situations, on the basis of Article 13 of the Protocol on the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council, the African Standing Ready Force (ASG) consisting of 25,000 people was formed. The APG's readiness to perform tasks was tested during the Amani Africa-2 command post exercise from 19 October–8 November 2015, in South Africa.

The structure of the ASG consists of the main headquarters (Addis Ababa), five regional brigades (Northern, Eastern, Southern, Western, and Central), police and civilian components, central and regional (two or three each) logistics bases.

Crisis management powers under agreements between states are vested in the regional economic communities and entities responsible for conflict prevention and resolution: the Economic Community of West African States, the Arab Maghreb Union, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, the Intergovernmental Authority for Development, the Conference of the Great Lakes Region, the South African Development Community, Economic Community of Central African States, the Community of Sahara and Sahel States, and the Eastern African Community.

APSA was established as an effective tool for conflict prevention and resolution. However, at present, the components of APSA do not function with the maximum degree of efficiency. This applies to the African Standby Force, which is not fully formed. In many ways, problems in the work of APSA are due to poor governance and lack of funding, as well as a lack of consensus among the leadership of African countries on security issues.

AU-UN Peacemaking Partnership: Challenges and Prospects

According to UN Secretary-General António Guterres, “the partnership between the UN and the AU on peace and security is fundamental to building a safer world for all” [AU, 2002]. Speaking at the opening of the 30th summit of heads of state and government of the AU states, the UN secretary-general put forward an initiative to adjust the strategy of UN peacekeeping operations, with the amendment that peacekeepers are often “deployed in places where there is no political settlement in sight.” According to him, “being a target for numerous armed groups, in the absence of options for a political settlement, UN peacekeepers are sometimes forced to play only a deterrent role” [TASS, 2018].

At the same time, it is obvious that, to solve complex problems of peacekeeping, there is a need to have specific missions address specific situations (including antiterrorist operations and ensuring peace with the assistance of military force). It is the partnership with the AU and subregional organizations that provides the UN with the opportunities to achieve this goal.

The central driving force of the UN-AU partnership is the cooperation between the UNSC and the AU Peace and Security Council (AUPSC), which have executive decision-making powers on peace and security issues. The first joint consultation between the councils took place in 2007. The AUPSC is in a privileged position compared to other multilateral organizations and is the only authorized body that systematically brings in the UN Security Council to participate in peacekeeping activities.

The issues of partnership, conflict prevention, and management are regulated in several communiqués of the African Union, UN Security Council resolutions, reports of the UN secretary-general and the chair of the AU Commission, as well as in the minutes of meetings.

A significant and successful achievement in the development of cooperation between the UN and the AU is the UNSC Resolution 1809 [UN, 2008], which helped strengthen the UN-AU partnership (aiming to solve common tasks to ensure collective security on the African continent and to create a fund for financing operations).

Despite the progress made, the partnership between the two councils is characterized by an unequal relationship, as both organizations differ in level of power, authority, political status, and resources [Forti, Singh, Carvalho, 2019]. Their cooperation is quite intense, but at the same time, these structures are becoming increasingly interdependent: the AU has more information about situations in hotbeds of conflict, and the UN Security Council has military and financial resources to carry out multicomponent peacekeeping missions. The UN Security Council pays great attention to the problems in Africa, concentrating its efforts on maintaining international peace and security: 50% of the UN Security Council meetings on countries in 2018 were devoted to Africa [Forti, Singh, 2019]. Thus, the role of the AU is to provide strategic political guidance and authority through the mandates of the Peace and Security Council, to enhance the coordination of international support, including financial contributions, and to provide technical support.

In addition, in the course of operational cooperation between the UN and the AU, a mechanism for the separation of areas of activity was built, which was strengthened after the signing of the strategic partnership agreement in 2017 [UN Office to the African Union, 2017]. The UN has succeeded in strengthening peace processes and concluding peace agreements, but it has not performed well in the use of coercive measures. While the AU is ready to conduct counterterrorism operations, it does not have the functionality to implement peace agreements [de Coning, 2019]. Thus, the AU and subregional organizations quickly stabilized the situations in Burundi, the Central African Republic, and Mali. After that, the UN conducted peacekeeping operations in these countries. To this end, African military and police personnel who participated in AU operations in the above-mentioned conflict states became UN peacekeepers. The reverse situation was observed in Somalia, where the UNSC authorized law enforcement and the AU deployed peacekeeping operations, took the over, and conducted them with logistical support from the UN and other partners [de Coning, 2019].

A striking example of effective cooperation between the UN and the AU is the maintenance of the peace process in the Central African Republic (CAR), when in 2017 the AU Peace and Security Council authorized

the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in the CAR. Under the initiative, the AUPSC, together with the Economic Community of Central African States, supported the AU Commission's efforts to mediate between the CAR government and 14 armed groups. In turn, the UNSC contributed to the resolution of the crisis in the CAR by establishing the UN Mission in the CAR (MINUSCA) with the aim of implementing mediation efforts and providing logistical support [UN, 2018 a, b].

Both councils took an effective part in bringing together the two parallel mediation processes initiated by Sudan in the second half of 2018; the UN and the AU provided support to the parties to the conflict, which accelerated the signing of the peace agreement in February 2019.

Despite the positive joint dynamics of cooperation between the UN and the AU, the problem areas of this partnership are also worth noting. First, there exist differences in the positions these organizations adhere to regarding conflict situations in African countries. The crisis in Libya is a vivid example of this. The members of the UNSC and AUPSC demonstrated sharp differences of opinion during their voting on UNSC Resolution 1973 (2011). Despite the efforts made by the UN Secretariat and the AU Commission to improve the coordination of their work in Libya, the political interests of the authoritative UN Security Council states (France, the United Kingdom and the United States) have become an obstacle to the development of a joint strategy. According to the S. M. Makinda, F. W. Okumu, and D. Mickler, the lack of complementarity during the discussion of the situation and strategy in Libya could lead to negative consequences and affect the settlement of conflicts in the African continent in the future [2016].

Second, the uneven distribution of influence among the countries that participate in both councils is the factor that limits cooperation between the UN and the AU. This is reflected in the fact that the 22 African member states that rotate in the two councils have fewer opportunities to advance their agenda compared to the power and influence of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council.

Third, it is also worth noting the following difficulties: duplication of efforts of the UN and AU secretariats in the course of peacekeeping operations and problems with the financing of joint missions, as well as the lack of specialists who are engaged in legal support of peacekeeping in Africa.

Fourth, an important point in the framework of the implementation of the peacekeeping process in African states is the issue of doctrinal and conceptual changes in the peacekeeping activities of the AU, since the current strategies were developed based on the experience of other peacekeeping organizations and without taking into account global transformations in the system of international relations. The problem is exacerbated by the implementation of peacekeeping missions in the face of ambiguous, politically ineffective mandates and by the lack of clearly developed conflict resolution strategies, which hampered the implementation of operations in Mali, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, the DRC and the Central African Republic.

A3 Voting Patterns on Key UNSC Resolutions in the Field of Peacekeeping

The A3 states (three African elected members of the UN Security Council) are rightly considered a link between the UN Security Council and the AUPSC due to their diplomatic potential and political status. The A3 countries (see Table 2) have the official authority to promote the positions of the AUPSC and support the projects of the AU Commission, including public statements to the UNSC and negotiations on its resolutions and outcome documents [Forti, Singh, 2019]. Within the A3 bloc, states regularly cooperate with each other,

and A3's permanent members participate in consultations of senior AU and UN officials. In addition, A3 has the greatest impact on UNSC meetings on problems in Africa. On the one hand, the positions of the A3 states on conflicts in Africa are supported by AUPSC strategies, which ensures the legitimacy and authority of the UN Security Council in decision-making. On the other hand, the division of opinion within A3 may contribute to the revision of the decisions of other members of the UN Security Council.

According to the Institute for Security Studies, Africa is of strategic importance in the UN Security Council. Thus, in 2018 alone, more than 50% of the meetings of the UN Security Council, 60% of its final documents, and 70% of its resolutions with mandates under Chapter VII relate to issues of ensuring peace and security in Africa [de Carvalho, Forti, 2020]. Despite this fact, many members of the UN Security Council did not take the conflicts in Africa as seriously as the crises in Syria and North Korea. For that reason, the African agenda has not been particularly divisive at the council's meetings.

Currently, the role of A3 is of great importance in the process of debates in the UN Security Council, solving geopolitical problems and adjusting the collective actions of the council. A3 members express unity of opinion through various approaches: first, by making joint statements to the UN Security Council, second, by holding negotiations to develop a common position and, third, through collective statements in the media. A special role is assigned to the Permanent Mission of the AU to the UN, which coordinates the activities of A3 and the AU, creates the ground for regular interaction with diplomats and officials in Addis Ababa, and ensures the partnership of the AU and the UN.

Table 1. Voting Patterns of the A3 Countries on UNSC Resolutions on African Peacekeeping (2005–19)

UN Security Council Resolution	Subject	Abstaining A3 Countries	Yes	No
2471 (2019)	Political conditions in South Sudan	Equatorial Guinea, Ivory Coast, South Africa		
2468 (2019)	United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara	South Africa	Equatorial Guinea, Ivory Coast	
2440 (2018)	United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara	Ethiopia	Equatorial Guinea, Ivory Coast	
2428 (2018)	South Sudan (sanctions)	Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia	Côte d'Ivoire	
2418 (2018)	South Sudan (sanctions)	Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia	Côte d'Ivoire	
2414 (2018)	United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara	Ethiopia	Equatorial Guinea, Ivory Coast	
2385 (2017)	Somalia and Eritrea (sanctions)	Egypt	Senegal, Ethiopia	
2317 (2016)	The situation in Somalia	Angola, Egypt	Senegal	

2304 (2016)	UN Mission in South Sudan	Egypt	Angola, Senegal	
1907 (2009)	The situation in Somalia		Burkina Faso, Uganda	Libya
1593 (2005)	Political conditions in the Sudan	Algeria	Tanzania, Benin	

Source: Compiled by the author on the basis of data from <https://digitallibrary.un.org/>

As for the analysis of voting patterns on conflicts in Africa, as can be seen in Table 1, the A3 bloc voted differently in the period from 2016–19 in 2005 and 2009. The timeframe for analysis was 2003–19. Cases of disagreement are of the greatest interest, as they reflect not only the national interests of A3 states, but also the causes of differences of opinion. According to Table 1, three cases with a difference in voting are related to Western Sahara, the conflict in which remains a complex political crisis for the AU and African UN states. While Equatorial Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire have advocated control of the region, Ethiopia and South Africa recognize an independent Western Sahara, as does the AU.

The positions of the A3 states also differ on the work of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in Darfur [Bokeriya, 2021a]. Following a briefing in 2016, Senegal, which at the time was the only A3 country to sign the treaty establishing the ICC, supported the activities of the ICC in Darfur. On the contrary, Egypt and Ethiopia criticized the work of the court and did not sign the treaty, while Egypt advocated respect for the sovereignty of Khartoum.

Further disagreements among the A3 states arose over the lifting of the arms embargo imposed on Eritrea in 2009, which, according to UN observers, supported the al-Shabaab armed group in Somalia, destabilizing the situations in Ethiopia and Djibouti. As a result, the Security Council refused to lift the sanctions. Senegal supported the lifting of sanctions. Egypt voted similarly, calling on the council to recognize Eritrea's role in the fight against international and regional terrorism [Delgado Rivera, 2018].

Egypt played a special role in the fight against terrorism during its tenure on the council in 2016–17, which initiated the adoption of 11 resolutions in the field of terrorism prevention, including a wide range of issues: from judicial cooperation to the problems of human trafficking and terrorist financing [UN, n.d.].

Egypt has actively participated in discussions on the imposition of an arms embargo on South Sudan. In April 2016, UN experts identified the supply of military equipment to the government of South Sudan from Egypt and recommended the introduction of an arms embargo on Juba. The U.S. supported the commission's proposal. Egypt opposed the embargo, as did Russia and China. This issue has become a serious ground for disagreement.

Ethiopia, with its status as the world's largest supplier of Blue Helmets, considers peacekeeping a priority. At the same time, Equatorial Guinea is sceptical about peacekeeping operations, believing that military intervention in conflict leads to violence rather than reduces it.

In the past few years, the A3 countries have played a key role in balancing the UNSC's efforts to address the most protracted challenges facing the African continent. For example, in June 2017, A3, together with other members of the council, held a high-level meeting on the relationship between food insecurity and the emergence of conflict, instability, security, and poverty in parts of Somalia, South Sudan and Nigeria [UN, 2017].

Practical Aspects of UN-AU Cooperation

The practical field of partnership between the UN and the AU is quite extensive and includes such areas as mediation, the AU's Silencing the Guns initiative against the proliferation and use of weapons, women's equal participation in peace and security, promoting fair elections, and addressing peacebuilding issues. Let us dwell on the first three areas in more detail.

Cooperation between the UN and the AU in the field of mediation is one of the most sought-after areas of partnership. The UN and the AU have been formally and informally engaged in mediation since 2007 in Burundi, Darfur, the Gambia, Liberia, Guinea-Bissau, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Mali, the Central African Republic, Libya, South Sudan, Madagascar and Togo. To implement mediation efforts, the UN and the AU have all the necessary tools and capabilities. Thus, the UNSC, the AUPSC, the UN secretary-general, and the chair of the AU Commission may appoint a special envoy to represent their organization in the mediation or facilitation process. On the part of the UN, there is a UN Mediation Support Group, which is a system-wide organization, while on the part of the AU there is an AU Mediation Support Group, established in 2019 for similar tasks to carry out mediation efforts.

At the same time, the role of women and the gender dimensions of conflict at the subnational and local levels remain unrecognized, marginalized and under-supported. According to UN Security Council Resolution 1325 [UN, 2000], which for the first time raised the issue of increasing the effective participation of women in peacekeeping and conflict prevention efforts, the absence and insufficient participation of African women in formal mediation processes is the result of the fact that this direction is not implemented effectively enough. In order to fulfil commitments to include women in peacekeeping in Africa, the UN and the AU have jointly established the African Women's Network for Conflict Prevention and Mediation (FemWise-Africa) [AU, 2020]. The project has launched awareness-raising activities, developed training programmes for women, and established standard operating procedures and plans to coordinate the collective efforts of the UN and the AU in the field of mediation and peacebuilding. High-level AU retreats on peace, security, and stability in Africa were held.

The Silencing the Guns initiative, proposed by the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government in 2013, provided a practical opportunity to advance the AU-UN partnership approach to conflict prevention. This project is being implemented within the framework of the first decade for the implementation of the AU's Agenda 2063 [UN, 2015a]. The aim of the initiative was to address the root causes of conflicts in Africa, strengthen the continent's capacity to maintain peace and security, and ensure the effective functioning of the mechanisms of APSA. To further advance the initiative, in 2016 the AUPSC adopted a common road map that regulated practical steps to implement the Silencing the Guns initiative by 2020. In addition, certain provisions of Agenda 2063 are reflected in the strategies and foreign policy concepts of African countries. In particular, Equatorial Guinea, during its presidency of the UN Security Council in 2019, actively lobbied for the Silencing the Guns project, which largely influenced the unanimous adoption of Resolution 2457 [UN, 2019], in which the UN emphasizes the important role of the AU in resolving conflicts in Africa, and also supports initiatives aimed at finding African solutions to African problems through international cooperation and partnership to help accelerate the pace of achievement of the designated goals.

By increasing the proportion of women participating in peacekeeping operations, it is planned to increase the operational effectiveness of peacekeeping missions, as well as to fulfil the tasks under the UN Security

Council Women, Peace and Security agenda, which was unanimously approved by Resolution 1325 in 2000. The achievement of this objective has created a solid basis for the partnership between the UN and the AU. Both organizations have contributed to the inclusion of issues on the Women, Peace and Security agenda in debates, political processes, resolutions, communiqués and initiatives. The UN further adopted nine resolutions on this topic and has annual debates and regular briefings of senior officials. The AU in 2014 appointed the Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security. In 2015, UNSC Resolution 2242 called on the secretary-general, in cooperation with member states, to review strategies to double the number of women in the military and police contingent of UN peacekeeping operations by 2020 [UN, 2015]. The UNSC president's statement in 2016 noted that both organizations can strengthen collective efforts to recognize and enhance the role of women in conflict prevention and resolution in Africa [UN, 2016]. The annual briefings of the AU were also devoted to this issue and timed to coincide with the annual debates of the UN Security Council on a similar topic. The AU encourages members to develop, adopt, and implement national action plans to implement Resolution 1325.

Research Methodology

In order to achieve the key objective of the article (a study of the relationship between the United Nations and the African Union in the field of peacekeeping based on the study of peacekeeping operations in Africa), a set of UN and AU data for the period from 2003–20 was identified. The dataset for the study included:

- 1) UN Security Council resolutions on conflicts in Africa;
- 2) data on the voting of the A3 countries on UN Security Council resolutions from 2003–19 (2019 in this context is due to the restriction of access to the voting results for 2020);
- 3) AU and UN statistics on the gender composition of key UN peacekeeping missions from 2003–20.

Based on the analysis of the collected set of documents, dynamics of UN peacekeeping operations in the designated period, the gender composition of UN missions, as well as the voting patterns of the A3 countries in the UN Security Council can be determined.

To build a dataset for analysis, electronic versions of 54 UNSC resolutions adopted between 2003–20 were identified and analyzed. Based on the data obtained, a quantitative and qualitative analysis of UN peacekeeping operations, the gender composition of peacekeeping missions, and the voting patterns of the A3 countries in the UN Security Council was carried out.

Analysis of Graphical Data of the Study

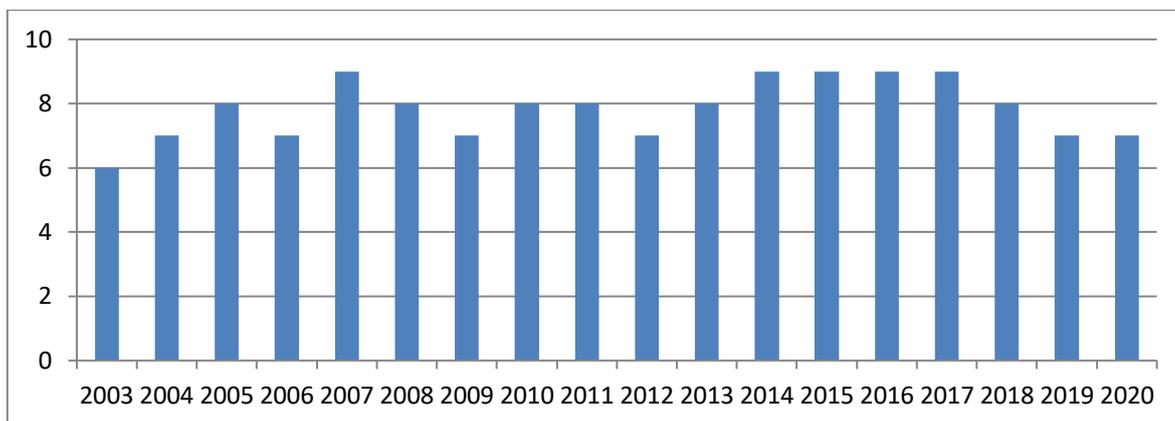


Figure 1. Number of UN Operations, 2003–20

Source: Compiled by the author on the basis of data from UN Peacekeeping [n.d.].

According to Figure 1, the largest number of UN peacekeeping operations were conducted in 2007 and in the period from 2014–17 (nine missions per year). Among the largest of the crises were the protracted civil wars in Sudan (1983–2005) and Somalia (1988–present), the Rwandan genocide (1994), the Ethiopian-Eritrean conflict (1998–2000), and the crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (1998–2002) [Bulatov, 2017]. According to Conflict Barometer 2018, a report on the work of scientists from Heidelberg, Germany, most wars (nine) were fought in the Middle East and Africa (six wars in Sub-Saharan Africa) out of 16. Two wars were fought in Nigeria, one each in the CAR, Ethiopia, between Somalia and Kenya, and in the Darfur province of South Sudan, where the UN conducted the African Union-UN Hybrid Operation (UNAMID, 2007–20) [HIIK, 2018]. Africa remains one of the most conflict-prone regions in the world (see Figure 1).

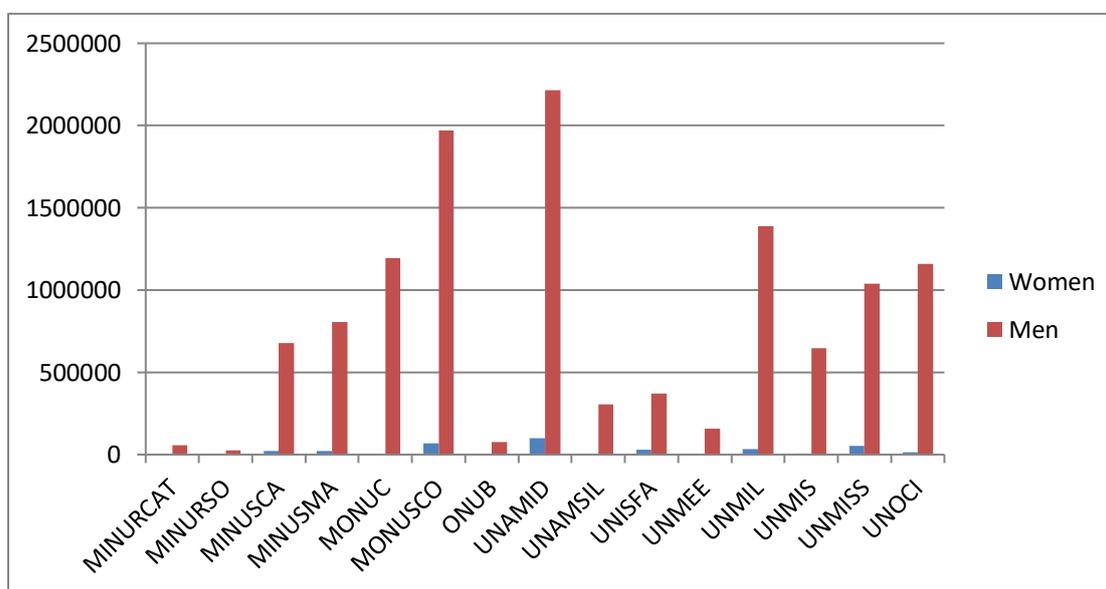


Figure 2. Total Number of Female and Male Personnel in UN Peacekeeping Operations, 2003–20

Source: Compiled by the author on the basis of data from UN Peacekeeping [n.d.].

If we analyze the number of women and men involved in 15 peacekeeping missions from 2003–20 in Africa, it is easy to see that the total number of men participating in each of the noted operations is significantly greater than the number of women. According to the data in Figure 2, the number of male personnel reached 2,214,778 (UNAMID operation), while the number of women did not exceed 99,517 in the same operation.

In addition, in some missions, women were not represented at all, in particular in ONUB, UNAMSIL and UNMEE. Thus, UN missions from 2003–20 can be divided into two types: mixed, in which both men and women were represented, and that were men-only. It is an obvious fact that the UN and the AU have a lot of work to do to double the number of female personnel in missions, to realize the right of women to professional self-determination, and to increase the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations through the equal participation of women in African peacekeeping. In addition, women have performed well in negotiation processes, peacekeeping, humanitarian response, and post-conflict reconstruction, and can help reduce sexual exploitation and violence. For example, female peacekeepers are rapidly providing support to women and children who are victims of violence in conflict zones.

Table 2. African Countries in the UN Security Council (2003–20)

Year	Country		
2003	Cameroon	Guinea	Angola
2004	Benin	Algeria	Angola
2005	Benin	Algeria	Tanzania
2006	Ghana	Congo	Tanzania
2007	Ghana	Congo	South Africa
2008	Burkina Faso	Libya	South Africa
2009	Burkina Faso	Libya	Uganda
2010	Nigeria	Gabon	Uganda
2011	Nigeria	Gabon	South Africa
2012	Morocco*	Togo	South Africa
2013	Morocco*	Togo	Rwanda
2014	Nigeria	Chad	Rwanda
2015	Nigeria	Chad	Angola
2016	Senegal	Egypt	Angola
2017	Senegal	Egypt	Ethiopia
2018	Côte d'Ivoire	Equatorial Guinea	Ethiopia
2019	Côte d'Ivoire	Equatorial Guinea	South Africa
2020	Niger	Tunisia	South Africa

*Morocco is not a member of the AU

Countries that are also members of the AUPSC are highlighted in bold

Source: Compiled by the author on the basis of data from G. de Carvalho and D. Forti [2020].

Table 2 shows the list of A3 countries that were part of the UN Security Council from 2003–20. According to statistics, African countries make up about 28% of the total number of UN members. Niger, South Africa and Tunisia were members of A3 in 2020, and Kenya replaced South Africa on the UN Security Council in January 2021. In order to increase the effectiveness of the work of A3, every four months one of the three countries becomes a coordinator so that the positions in the UN Security Council correspond to previous agreements reached at the AU level.

Conclusion

Ensuring peace and security on the African continent is a global challenge, as Africa remains one of the most conflict-prone regions in the world. Initially, the African peace and security architecture was established as an effective mechanism for the prevention and resolution of conflicts. However, at present, the organizations that make up APSA are not working effectively. In particular, the African Constant Readiness Force remains in the process of formation. In addition, obstacles to the functioning of APSA are poor governance, insufficient funding, and lack of consensus among African leaders on security and peacekeeping issues.

Despite the positive dynamics of interaction between the UN and the AU, there are problematic nodes in the partnership between the two organizations. First, it is possible to note differences in positions on the settlement of crisis situations in African states, for example, in Libya. Second, the uneven distribution of diplomatic potential among the countries participating in the UN Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council is a serious limiting factor for their effective cooperation. Thus, the 22 participating African states, which succeed each other in the two councils, have much less opportunity to lobby their agenda in comparison with the power of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council. Third, during the work of the two councils, the efforts of the UN and AU secretariats in the process of implementing peacekeeping operations are duplicated, there are problems with the financing of joint missions, and there is also a shortage of specialists who are engaged in legal support of peacekeeping in Africa. All these factors reduce the effectiveness of the ongoing peacekeeping missions of the UN and the AU, but at the same time they are an incentive to find joint ways to overcome these problems and improve collective action to stabilize conflicts in Africa.

Of particular importance in the implementation of the peacekeeping process in African countries is the issue of doctrinal and conceptual changes in the activities of the AU in peacekeeping since current strategies were based on the experience of other peacekeeping organizations and do not take into account global changes in the system of international relations. Often, peacekeeping missions are carried out in the context of ineffective mandates. For example, operations in Mali, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the Central African Republic were conducted in the absence of well-defined conflict resolution strategies.

At the moment, it remains an open question how the UNSC will be able to promote Resolution 2457 given its limited nature in terms of practical and operational obligations. However, on a positive note, the AU

Commission and the UN Secretariat have established monitoring mechanisms to coordinate support for the implementation of the Silencing the Guns initiative.

Achieving the targets of increasing the proportion of women in peacekeeping operations in Africa has created a solid basis for partnership between the UN and the AU. The UN signed nine resolutions on this topic and holds annual debates and regular briefings of senior officials. The AU, together with the UN, has launched a lot of work to promote this topic, including through the organization of seminars, meetings, briefings, and the publication of joint communiqués.

According to the analysis of peacekeeping operations in Africa from 2003–20, the total number of men who took part in each of the missions significantly outweighs the number of women. There are missions in which only men participated. This suggests that two types of peacekeeping operations were conducted during this period: mixed, with both men and women, and men-only.

Differences in the positions of the A3 bloc during the voting in the UN Security Council from 2016–19, in 2005 and 2009, are associated with the pressure of more powerful countries acting as informal leaders of A3 on the formal composition of A3 in the designated period. The need to overcome pressure had a negative impact on A3's ability to effectively coordinate the development of common positions at meetings in Addis Ababa and New York [Forti, Singh, 2019].

In the future, the effectiveness of the joint meetings of A3 and the members of the UN Security Council and the AU on African conflicts will largely depend on the solution of the issue of political pressure on A3.

Thus, the UN and the AU will have to do large-scale and methodical work to double the number of female personnel in missions, increase the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations by developing joint mechanisms for harmonizing operational strategies depending on the situation in the conflicting state, and implement the Silencing the Guns initiative in full.

References

African Union (AU) (2002) Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. Available at: <https://www.peaceau.org/uploads/psc-protocol-en.pdf> (accessed 13 November 2020).

African Union (AU) (2020) Strengthening African Women's Participation in Conflict Prevention, Mediation Processes and Peace Stabilisation Efforts: Operationalisation of "FemWise-Africa." Available at: <https://www.peaceau.org/uploads/final-concept-note-femwise-sept-15-short-version-clean-4-flyer.pdf> (accessed 30 January 2021).

African Union (AU) (n.d.) The Peace & Security Council. Available at: <https://au.int/en/psc> (accessed 2 November 2020).

Bokeriya S. (2021a) African Union in Addressing Regional Peace and Conflict in Darfur. *Asia and Africa Today*, issue 1, pp. 37–42. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.31857/S032150750013624-8>.

Bokeriya S. (2021b) Uchastie afrikanskih zhenshhin v operacijah po podderzhaniju mira Organizacii Ob#edinennyh Nacij [African Women's Participation in the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations]. Proceedings of the Zhenshhiny vo vlasti, biznese, nauke i kul'ture [Women in Power, Business, Science and Culture] International Scientific Conference. Yaroslavl, pp. 13–16 (in Russian).

Bulatov V. (2017) Afrikanskaja arhitektura mira i bezopasnosti [African Peace and Security Architecture]. *Zarubezhnoe voennoe obozrenie* [Foreign Military Review], no 3, pp. 12–7. Available at: http://factmil.com/publ/strana/afrika/afrikanskaja_arkhitektura_mira_i_bezopasnosti_2017/166-1-0-1142 (accessed 12 December 2020) (in Russian).

de Carvalho G., Forti D. (2020) Africa Can Become More Influential in the UN Security Council. The Institute for Security Studies, 12 March. Available at: <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/africa-can-become-more-influential-in-the-un-security-council> (accessed 30 May 2021).

de Coning C. (2019) Africa and UN Peace Operations: Implications for the Future Role of Regional Organisations. *United Nations Peace Operations in a Changing Global Order* (C. de Coning, M. Peter (eds)). Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 213–29. Available at: http://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-99106-1_11.

Delgado Rivera J. (2018). An Inside View of African Diplomacy in the UN Security Council. Africa Portal, 14 February. Available at: <https://www.africaportal.org/features/inside-view-african-diplomacy-un-security-council/> (accessed 18 January 2021).

Denisova T. S. (2015). Politicheskoe liderstvo v Afrike: proshloe i nastojashhee [Political Leadership in Africa: Past and Present]. *Vostok. Afro-aziatskie obshhestva: istorija i sovremennost'* [East. Afro-Asian Societies: History and Modernity], no. 6, pp. 169–73 (in Russian).

Forti D., Singh P. (2019) Toward a More Effective UN-AU Partnership on Conflict Prevention and Crisis Management. International Peace Institute and Institute for Security Studies. Available at: https://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/1910_UN-AU_Partnership-1.pdf (accessed 6 June 2022).

Forti D., Singh P., de Carvalho G. (2019) After Annual Conference, UN and AU Move From Alignment to Impact. IPI Global Observatory, 17 May. Available at: <https://theglobalobservatory.org/2019/05/after-conference-un-au-move-from-alignment-to-impact/> (accessed 18 January 2021).

Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research (HIK) (2018) Conflict Barometer 2018 Report. Available at: <https://hiik.de/konfliktbarometer/bisherige-ausgaben/> (accessed 6 June 2022).

Kostelyanets S. V., Tkachenko A. A., Deych T. L., Ismagilova R. N. (2017) Razreshenie voenno-politicheskikh konfliktov v Afrike: rol' regional'nyh organizacij [*Resolving Political-Military Conflicts in Africa: The Role of Regional Organisations*] (S. V. Kostelyanets, A. A. Tkachenko (eds)). Moscow: Institute of Africa, Russian Academy of Sciences (in Russian).

Larionova M. V. (2016) Ocenka jeffektivnosti vzaimodejstvija mezhdunarodnyh institutov v processe global'nogo upravljenija [Assessing the Effectiveness of Interaction Between International Institutions in the Process of Global Governance]. *International Organisations Research Journal*, vol. 11, no 1, pp. 126–52. Available at: <http://doi.org/10.17323/1996-7845/2016-01-126> (in Russian).

Makinda S. M., Okumu F. W., Mickler D. (2016) *The African Union: Addressing the Challenges of Peace, Security, and Governance*. London: Routledge.

Pergantis V. (2015) UN-AU Partnerships in International Peace and Security: Allocation of Responsibility in Case of UN Support to Regional Missions, *International Organizations Law Review*, vol. 13, no 1, pp. 74–99.

Romadan L. I., Shagalov V. A. (2015) United Nations - African Union Cooperation in Conflict Prevention, Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding, *MGIMO Review of International Relations*, vol. 6, no 45, pp. 174–181.

Sidorova G. M. (2021) Sovet Bezopasnosti OON kak jeffektivnyj instrument po obespecheniju mira i stabil'nosti v Afrike [The UN Security Council as an Effective Instrument for Peace and Stability in Africa]. *Diplomaticheskaja sluzhba* [Diplomatic Service], no 1, pp. 36–43. Available at: <https://panor.ru/articles/sovet-bezopasnosti-oon-kak-effektivnyy-instrument-po-obespecheniyu-mira-i-stabilnosti-v-afrike/55625.html> (accessed 6 June 2022) (in Russian).

TASS (2018) Guterrish: Partnerstvo OON i Afrikanskogo sojuza neobhodimo dlja postroenija bolee bezopasnogo mira [Guterres: The UN-African Union Partnership Is Essential to Building a Safer World]. 28 January. Available at: <https://tass.ru/mezhdunarodnaya-panorama/4909584> (accessed 3 January 2021) (in Russian).

Teteryuk A.S., Chizhevsky Y.A. (2014) International and Political Dimension of the Libyan Conflict, *Vestnik RUDN. International Relations*, no 2, pp. 23–32.

United Nations (UN) (2000) Security Council Resolution 1325: Women and Peace and Security. Available at: [https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/1325\(2000\)](https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/1325(2000)) (accessed 27 January 2021).

United Nations (UN) (2008) Security Council Resolution 1809: Peace and Security in Africa. Available at: [https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/1809\(2008\)](https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/1809(2008)) (accessed 15 January 2021).

United Nations (UN) (2011) Security Council Resolution 1973: The Situation in Libya. Available at: <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/1973> (accessed 6 June 2022).

United Nations (UN) (2015a) Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. Framework Document. Available at: https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/33126-doc-framework_document_book (accessed 6 June 2022).

United Nations (UN) (2015b) Security Council Resolution 2242: Women and Peace and Security. Available at: [https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2242\(2015\)](https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2242(2015)) (accessed 07 August 2021).

United Nations (UN) (2016) Statement by the President of the Security Council S/PRST/2016/9. Available at: <https://undocs.org/en/S/PRST/2016/9> (accessed 30 January 2021).

United Nations (UN) (2017) Security Council Arria-Formula Open Meeting on “Responding to the Secretary General’s Call to Action on the Risk of Famine in the conflict-affected areas of Yemen, Somalia, South-Sudan and Northeast Nigeria.” Available at: <https://www.un.org/webcast/pdfs/170616pm-sc-arria-famine.pdf> (accessed 21 April 2020).

United Nations (UN) (2018a) Security Council 8378th Meeting. Available at: https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_pv_8378.pdf (accessed 30 January 2021).

United Nations (UN) (2018b) Security Council Resolution 2448: The Situation in the Central African Republic. Available at: <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/2448> (accessed 03 January 2021).

United Nations (UN) (2019) Security Council Resolution 2457: Cooperation Between the United Nations and Regional and Subregional Organizations in Maintaining International Peace and Security: Silencing the Guns in Africa. Available at: [https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2457\(2019\)](https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2457(2019)) (accessed 09 January 2021).

United Nations (UN) Digital Library. Available at: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/> (accessed 9 July 2022).

United Nations (UN) Office to the African Union (2017) Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security. Available at: https://unoau.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/signed_joint_framework.pdf (accessed 10 April 2021).

United Nations (UN) Peacekeeping (n.d.) Past Peace Operations. Available at: <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/past-peacekeeping-operations> (accessed 9 July 2022).

Williams P.D., Boutellis A. (2014) Partnership peacekeeping: Challenges and opportunities in the United Nations–African Union Relationship. *African Affairs*, vol. 113, no. 451, pp. 254–278.