

(CSSDCA), also of July 2000. Through its four calabashes,² the CSSDCA commits member states to the process of developing a common position on the basis that the security, stability and development of each African country is inseparably linked to that of other African countries. The four principles were first articulated in the Kampala Leadership Forum Document of 1991, in recognition of the fact that the problems of security and stability in many African countries had impaired their capacity to achieve the necessary level of intra- and inter-African cooperation that is required to attain socio-economic development and transformation.

The CSSDCA Declaration therefore provides a framework for collective action and cooperation at regional, continental and international levels. It is upon this foundation that early prevention of conflicts and maintenance of durable peace in Africa must be established if the region is to tackle effectively such issues as poverty (socio-economic inequities and inequalities), ethnic violence, human rights violations, disputes over political participation, land (re)distribution, illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons, the plight of refugees and internally displaced persons and illegal exploitation of mineral resources.

According to Mills and Oppenheimer,³ the African challenge is a complex one, rooted in history and defined by ill-formed (sometimes dysfunctional) geographic and state units, with domestic, regional and international dimensions relating both to its colonial history and to the nature of the continent's transition to independence, marked by the growth of corruption, nepotism, populist redistribution and patronage politics. This is reflected in the continent's economic decline as well as its political and institutional failures.

Underlying the fact that violence is endemic and persistent in Africa is the reality that the continent is constantly exhibiting changing and challenging dynamics characterised by shifting patterns of international and regional engagements, in its quest for solutions. Notable in this dimension is the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), modelled on the United States

Marshal Plan, for Africa's reconstruction in cooperation with industrialised countries. NEPAD's Programme of Action focuses on capacity building, peace and security, economic and corporate governance, banking and financial sectors, regional infrastructure projects and agricultural development and market access for Africa's member states' products. NEPAD also establishes, through peer review, a club of African states committed to good governance and to ending conflict.

Africa therefore continues to demonstrate eagerness in taking responsibility for its destiny, based on initiatives aimed at enabling its people to tackle their own problems following an African agenda, managed by Africans and designed to promote and foster the continent's interest, with the active involvement of the international community.

AU Peace and Security Council

The AU PSC was set up in July 2002 when the First Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly, which is also the plenary organ of the organisation, resolved to replace the OAU Central Organ with the Council. The PSC is therefore the standing decision-making organ for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. The protocol establishing the PSC entered into force in December 2003. The PSC is composed of:

- a Panel of the Wise, which is a body that advises the council on issues relating to the maintenance and promotion of peace;
- a continental Early Warning System, to facilitate anticipation and prevention of conflicts;
- an African Standby Force (ASF)—a body of multidisciplinary military and civilian contingents for rapid deployment; and
- a Special Fund to provide the financial resources for its activities.

The multiplicity of the PSC components projects its structure as being functionally decentralised; an aspect that has attracted some criticism, mainly on how these structures should relate with mechanisms of other regional security organisations such as the

Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). (That topic, however, falls out of the scope of this paper.)

The establishment of regional standby brigades

The rationale, based on past experience (notably in 1994 in Rwanda), is that in conflict, time is of the essence if one is to prevent an emerging crisis from degenerating into a catastrophe. Under the UN peacekeeping structure, it takes on average three to six months from the time the UN Security Council decides to establish a peacekeeping mission until it is able to deploy such a mission.⁴ During this time period lives may be lost while the conflict escalates, spilling over to neighbouring regions.

The AU decision taken at its 2002 Durban summit to establish a PSC and an African Standby Force (ASF) for conducting peace support operations in the continent was therefore forward looking. In its recommendations, the AU envisaged the development of an African common security policy by 2010 with the establishment of an ASF capable of rapid deployment. The ASF would comprise standby brigades in each of the five regions (south, east, north, west and central Africa).

The powers of the PSC are outlined in Article VII of the Protocol for the establishment of the PSC, and primary among them is the power to implement the common defence policy for the AU within the context of the UN.

Pursuant to the AU 2002 Inaugural Summit at which African Heads of State and Government signed the Protocol for the establishment of the PSC, under which the ASF and the Military Staff Committee (MSC) were established, the AU prepared the Common African Defence and Security Policy Framework (CADSP) as well as the policy framework for the establishment of the ASF and the MSC. These were then considered by government experts, African Chiefs of Defence Staff (ACDS) and ministers of foreign affairs, defence and security.

In January 2004, the 4th Meeting of ACDS and experts was held in Addis Ababa and was

immediately followed by the First Meeting of African Ministers of Defence and Security. The ACDS meeting focused on issues relating to the establishment of the ASF, the MSC and the CADSP, furthering the aims already proposed by, among others, the Second and Third meetings of the ACDS of 1997 and May 2003 respectively, which recommended that the AU Commission and the five regions pursue efforts to establish a standby brigade in each of the regions.

Eastern Africa Standby Brigade (EASBRIG)

In implementing the AU Commission's requirements, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) convened the Jinja meeting of Experts in February 2004 on the establishment of the Eastern Africa Standby Brigade (EASBRIG). This was followed by a meeting of Eastern African Chiefs of Defence Staff (EACDS) from the Comoros (which sent a representative), Djibouti, Kenya, Madagascar, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda, the defence attaché of Tanzania, who attended as an observer, and a representative from the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA). There were also observers from the Multinational Stand-by High Readiness Brigade for United Nations operations (SHIRBRIG) and Reinforcement of African Peacekeeping Capacity (RECAMP). It was noted that, once established, EASBRIG would encompass 13 east African countries. Hence, in addition to those mentioned above would be included Eritrea, Ethiopia, Mauritius and the Seychelles.

Mission scenarios

In order to assess fully and objectively the requirements for the establishment of EASBRIG, it is important to recall that the structures of the ASF are informed by missions and scenarios defined within the Third ACDS Policy Framework for the establishment of the ASF.

A Scenario 1 approach would entail provision of military advice to a political mission,

as was the case in Côte d'Ivoire. Under Scenario 2, the AU or a regional observer mission is supposed to co-deploy with a UN mission, as was the case with the OAU/AU Liaison Mission in Ethiopia-Eritrea (OLMEE) or the Verification Monitoring Team (VMT) in the Sudan. A Scenario 3 mission is a stand-alone AU or regional observer mission, such as the AU Mission in Burundi (AMIB) or the AU Mission in the Comoros (AMIC). Scenario 4 entails an AU or regional peace-keeping force for Chapter VI and preventive deployment missions (and peace building), such as the AU Mission in Burundi (AMIB), while Scenario 5 means an AU peacekeeping force for complex multidimensional peace-keeping missions, including those involving low-level spoilers. A Scenario 6 mission would include intervention, for example, in genocide situations where the international community does not act promptly.

Operationalisation of EASBRIG

Based on the view that the AU emphasises standardised regional standby brigades for Scenario 4 as opposed to specific structures by each of the regions, the EACDS concurred with the basic force requirements as set out by the AU. The EACDS recognised that the quantities they relied on were derivatives of the UN specifications that entail the following tables of organisation and equipment (TOEs):

- brigade (mission level);
- headquarters support unit of up to 65 personnel and 16 vehicles;
- headquarters company and support unit of up to 120 personnel;
- 4 x light infantry battalions, each composed of up to 750 personnel and 70 vehicles;⁵
- engineer unit of up to 505 personnel;
- light signals unit of up to 135 personnel;
- reconnaissance company (wheeled) of up to 150 personnel;
- helicopter unit of up to 80 personnel, 10 vehicles and 4 helicopters;
- military police unit of up to 48 personnel and 17 vehicles;

- light multi-role logistical unit of up to 190 personnel and 40 vehicles;
- level two medical unit of up to 35 personnel and 10 vehicles;
- military observer group of up to 120 officers; and
- civilian support group consisting of logistical, administration and budget components.

In order to assist troop-contributing countries (TCCs) to determine the details of contributions and commitments, the EACDS noted that the AU was in the process of developing and gaining approval for TOEs that should serve as a useful guide and base document against which EASBRIG contributions and commitments could be assessed. The EACDS decided that when the planning element (PLANELM) finalises the TOEs of EASBRIG, it should also include sealift capabilities, given the extended coastline of the East African region, as well as additional fire-support capabilities in the case of Scenarios 5 and 6.

During the meeting various countries proposed their contributions to EASBRIG, while others asked for time to consult and report back later. Rwanda offered two light infantry battalions with organic transport, one mechanised battalion (with 10 armoured personnel carriers and four ICVs), one signal platoon, one provost company, one engineer squadron/company, one medical company, one special forces company and public relations and legal officers. Sudan offered one light infantry battalion, including organic transport to EASBRIG.

Kenya, while offering its Peace Support Training Centre (PSTC) to serve as a regional centre of excellence at all levels, from tactical through to strategic, also offered to provide one light infantry battalion including organic transport, one medical company and one squadron of engineers.

Djibouti offered one light infantry battalion (consisting of three sub-units) with organic transport composed of 330–350 persons in the order of a support command company, two infantry companies and one de-mining team. Djibouti also offered one high-ranking officer as part of PLANELM and proposed to

host a regional logistics centre, while Uganda offered one light infantry battalion, including organic support. Somalia offered one infantry company with 10 technicians.

EASBRIG membership and the role of IGAD

During the meeting it was observed that the 13 EASBRIG member states are also members of several regional economic blocs, namely, COMESA, the East African Community (EAC), IGAD and the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC). This creates interfaces since no single regional economic community (REC) accommodates all 13 member states; the difficulty, however, is in designating one single REC to manage the EASBRIG.⁶

None of the existing RECs could therefore claim to represent completely EASBRIG on behalf of the AU, while recognising the designated interim role allocated to IGAD in this respect. The EACDS therefore decided that the appropriate role of IGAD would be that of interim coordination, including coordination of all activities of the EASBRIG, calling meetings of the Council of Ministers of Defence and Security for EASBRIG and the East African Ministers of Defence and Security, undertaking fundraising in conjunction with other RECs, the AU and the UN to support the work of EASBRIG, providing and sharing information to facilitate planning for the EASBRIG and establishing an EASBRIG fund to coordinate donor funding and resources offered by the international community.

After analysing various case studies of command and control structures, the EACDS agreed to conform to the following structure for EASBRIG:

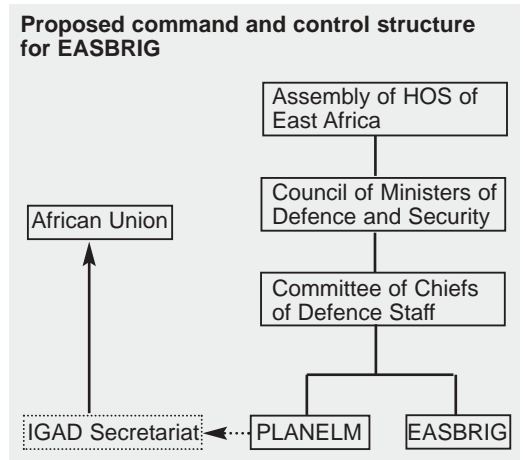
The EACDS decided to appoint a sub-committee to work out the budget implications of the PLANELM and the proposed rules for country assessments/contributions.

Given the requirement to establish a Mechanism in East Africa to manage EASBRIG, the EACDS decided to establish a

Committee of EACDS ('the Committee'). The Committee will be responsible to an Eastern African Council of Ministers of Defence and Security ('the Council') which will in turn report to the Assembly of the Heads of State of Eastern Africa for EASBRIG. The Committee will be responsible for the management of all aspects of EASBRIG force preparation and will regularly report to the Council in this respect. The EACDS agreed that force deployment of EASBRIG would require authorisation by Eastern African Heads of State and Government.

On the chairing of the EASBRIG Heads of State meetings, the Council and Committee, the EACDS decided that a system of rotation, based on voluntary country offers (that is open to and applies to all EASBRIG member states) be followed.

The EACDS agreed on the requirement for the existence of a permanent PLANELM for EASBRIG, consisting of a nucleus of one military officer from each member state, working on a regional rotational basis and with limited terms of service within the Element. The EASBRIG PLANELM, which will be sep-



arate from the brigade headquarters, will be required to interact with the continental PLANELM within the Commission of the AU. The brigade headquarters itself is a separate arrangement. The regional PLANELM therefore constituted a permanent and separate structure, responsible for force preparation of EASBRIG. The staff of the PLANELM may deploy in-theatre and/or at the rear head-

quarters, or be divided between the two locations as determined by the chief of staff of PLANELM.

The Eastern Africa PLANELM will be responsible to the Committee, also working directly towards the PLANELM at the level of the AU. Within this staffing structure, it is proposed that the terms of reference for the PLANELM responsibilities include the following:

- Monitoring the implementation of the recommendations relating to the establishment of the EASBRIG by contributing member states.
- Developing and updating standard operating procedures (SOPs) within the framework of the generic AU SOPs for peace support operations (PSO), which are consistent with the UN doctrine.
- Coordinating and harmonising resource contributions and commitments for the Standby Brigade, submitting data to the Committee of EACDS and sharing information and planning data with the AU Commission (Peace and Security Division) and the UN Standby Arrangements System (UNSAS).
- Developing databases, options and contingency plans for the strategic movement of regional standby troops and equipment, in order to ensure rapid deployment of EASBRIG or its components by reducing pre-deployment planning and deployment time.
- Evolving a concept of combined (i.e. from different countries) force preparation (ongoing operational training) for the EASBRIG, including the planning and conduct of regional combined training exercises (CTX).
- Establishing a concept of mobilisation and pre-deployment training to ensure mission readiness.
- Additionally, coordinating efforts towards the establishment of regional centres of excellence for PSO training, as well as monitoring training at these centres.
- Being prepared to support the AU Commission with operational planning at all levels, including contingency planning

and participating in fact-finding missions towards the deployment of missions in the East African area or involving the deployment of EASBRIG.

- Collecting, evaluating and determining best practices (lessons learned) from previous and ongoing missions and, where necessary, collaborating with research institutions for this purpose.
- Evaluating and submitting an annual report to the Committee of EACDS and the Commission of the AU on the status of the EASBRIG, making recommendations to address relevant problems and challenges, and projections for the future maintenance and employment of the Brigade.
- Submitting an annual audited report to the Committee of EACDS on the financial and budgetary state of the PLANELM and/or EASBRIG.

During meetings in Addis Ababa in January 2004, African Chiefs of Defence Staff and Ministers of Defence and Security reaffirmed their earlier decision to establish the ASF in two phases. Phase one is to end on 30 June 2005. During this phase, the key AU objective would be to establish a strategic level management capacity for Scenarios 1 to 2, while RECs would complement the AU by establishing regional forces up to a brigade. In Phase one priority will be on the military and police aspects of EASBRIG since UN humanitarian, development and human rights elements, which do not require UN Security Council mandate, could deploy in tandem with EASBRIG and other ASF missions.

Phase two envisages that by 30 June 2010 the AU will have developed a capacity to manage complex peacekeeping operations, while the RECs continue to develop the capacity to deploy a mission headquarter for Scenario 4, involving AU/regional peacekeeping forces.

Scenarios 1 to 3 entail less complex structures, minimal management effort and fewer resources for deployment and sustainment. In contrast, Scenarios 5 to 6 entail enormous management effort, as well as considerable

resources for deployment and sustainment of missions, that may only be attained during Phase 2 of the establishment of the ASF. Between these two extremes, Scenario 4 appears to be the type of mission and structure for which all regional brigades, including the EASBRIG, are likely to be involved in normally and in the foreseeable future. In line with the guidelines received from the various AU meetings, the efforts of the East African region should therefore aim at establishing an EASBRIG for Chapter VI peacekeeping operations and preventive deployment, as well as peace-building missions along the lines of AMIB.

While the EACDS took note of these guidelines and recommendations, regional realities appear to call for an earlier development of a more robust capacity, closer to that reflected in Scenario 5 above.

Standardisation of doctrine and training

In conformity with guidelines from the AU, EASBRIG will adopt the relevant UN doctrine for PSO. However, the EACDS recalled that the development of AU SOPs was recommended by the 3rd Meeting of the ACDS as a joint effort between the AU Commission and RECs. In this respect, the Eastern African PLANELM should not only start the development of appropriate SOPs for EASBRIG, given requisite resources and expertise, it should in addition start the development of an appropriate doctrine for the operational and tactical deployment of the brigade. The development of such a document would enable the region to tap regional expertise and resources that contribute towards the work of the joint work group to be established by the AU and RECs. It is not necessary for the PLANELM to aim at the development of a document covering the whole spectrum of operational and tactical deployment of the EASBRIG; it could develop appropriate sections of the document for submission to the AU Commission to facilitate harmonisation with the ASF doctrine.

On training, the EACDS noted that other regions, West Africa in particular, have adopt-

ed a three-tier system for the development of regional centres of excellence, namely: tactical (Mali); operational (Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre) Ghana; and strategic (Nigerian War College). Elsewhere peacekeeping training is presented as an add-on by existing institutions. The EACDS decided that the region should develop a clear and suitable policy in this regard.

The EACDS agreed that:

- EASBRIG member states should propose regional centres of excellence to the IGAD Secretariat before the end of March 2004; and
- offers should be made for the establishment of the PLANELM, and that external assistance towards improving on and maintaining the effectiveness of such institutions should be channelled through the RECs.

During discussions, the representative from RECAMP (France) invited EASBRIG to make use of the services of the Peacekeeping School in Koulikouro (Mali) for training of staff officers at brigade or battalion level. The representative from SHIRBRIG offered access to its training and possible participation in training activities.

Mission sustainment and logistical bases

Member states agreed that EASBRIG, upon establishment, should be supported by a centralised regional logistical infrastructure that would also harness available external initiatives and assistance. EACDS recognised, however, that this was an issue that required further investigation. A point of consideration was that the regional logistical base must be located in a country and at a place where the greatest benefit could be derived from the infrastructure and investment made towards its establishment.

The instructive experiences of the AU in respect of the African Mission in Burundi (AMIB) underscore the reality of the need for member states to contribute resources to deployed missions within the framework of the ASF. Drawing on the coordination func-

tion of IGAD, the EACDS requested IGAD to commission an independent study involving the UN to determine the logistical support framework for EASBRIG. This is to be concluded before the end of August 2004.

External initiatives

The EACDS reiterated the recommendation from the Fourth Meeting of the ACDS and the First Meeting of African Ministers of Defence and Security that regions should, as much as possible, undertake the establishment of the Regional Brigades with their own resources. The EACDS further called upon the AU to coordinate all external initiatives to build African peacekeeping capacity and that the Eastern Africa Region should devise a common approach to external initiatives.

Legal framework

The EACDS agreed that EASBRIG would operate on the basis of a memorandum of understanding (MoU), which could eventually be transformed into a higher legal framework such as a protocol, treaty or defence pact. They decided to forward a separate Draft Protocol for the Establishment of EASBRIG to legal experts as input for such an MoU.

Conclusion

The move by Eastern African countries to establish a standby brigade underscores their commitment towards the management of conflicts in the region. It is a positive step in complementing UN and AU efforts in peace support operations. The realisation of member states' commitments is commendable and should attract support from all corners.

Why should African countries pool their resources together for the common defence and security of the region? First, such a policy is likely to reduce suspicion and rivalry among states—a factor that has engendered conflicts in the continent and has traditionally hindered interstate cooperation and integration in Africa. Second, cooperation will increase

transparency in national defence and security policies. Third, a common policy will provide best practices to strengthen the defence and security sectors as well as to safeguard individual national, sub-regional and continental values. A Common Defence and Security Policy will be cost effective to member states, as it will eliminate unnecessary national expenditure on defence and security and will allow for the reallocation of resources to address more threatening challenges such as poverty and globalisation.

As the AU embarks on creating a Common Defence Policy, certain issues are likely to continue posing a threat. First is the question of sustainability in terms of financing the ASF during intervention times. More often than not, conflicts in Africa are lethal, and in several cases unpredictable. A recent example was the reoccurrence of conflict in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in May 2004, when dissident troops captured the town of Bukavu despite the presence of UN peacekeepers in the country. An ASF will have to be well equipped (which calls for proper and sustained financing) in order to mitigate conflicts of this nature. Finance, however, remains a thorny issue for many African countries still grappling with food insecurity, disease, low levels of literacy, among other gloomy issues.

Other challenges to be tackled will entail the issue of language. Africa is divided into various linguistic groupings – English, French, Portuguese and Arabic. Which language, therefore, will be the language of command for the standby force? Of equal importance is the command structure for the force. Each country/region has its own command structure that is familiar and it may not be easy to adopt a new one.

In the face of these challenges, it is important that flexibility of African countries surpasses their rigidity if they are to see success in creating a unified ASF. This will require all the five regions moving at the same pace in creating their regional brigades in response to the AU's call. The task is not massive—it simply requires commitment.

Notes

1. The discussion on the establishment of the Eastern Africa Standby Brigade is based on the proceedings of the February 2004 Jinja Meeting by the Eastern Africa Chiefs of Defence Staff. A full version of the Brigade's framework is available at <http://www.iss.org.za/AF/RegOrg/unity_to_unity/IGAD.html#top> (30 August 2004).
2. The Solemn Declaration, in its declaration of principles, refers to its four major areas of concern (security, stability, development and cooperation) as calabashes.
3. G Mills, and J Oppenheimer Making Africa succeed, in R Gibb, T Hughes, G Mills and T Vaahtoranta, *Charting a new course; Globalisation, African recovery and the New Africa Initiative*, South African Institute of International Affairs, Johannesburg, 2002, pp 90-105:92.
4. See Project on Peacekeeping and the United Nations, Developing a rapid deployment capability: An old idea for troubled times, <<http://www.clw.org/un/rapreac.html>> (5 May 2004).
5. The EACDS decided that EASBRIG should aim to establish three light infantry battalions and one mechanised battalion.
6. For example, COMESA covers a number of countries beyond the East African region. The EAC has only three member states and IGAD covers seven of the 13 countries.