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Foreign Military and Security Bases

Implications for the Practice of Peace and Security in Africa

SEBASTIAN ANGZOROKUU PAALO AND
JOHN-PAUL SAFUNU BANCHANI

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As key contemporary global phenomena, foreign military and security bases have become a topical theme in academic and policy circles in recent decades. This is largely because of the increasing complexity of security challenges and the apparent lack of capacity of the affected states, coupled with competition among external powers for spheres of influence to establish military bases abroad as an extension to their foreign policies rooted in cultural, economic, political, and overseas national and security interests.¹ This chapter adopts the definition of a foreign military base as “an extraterritorial unit with an external actor’s sovereign or semi-sovereign rights.”² “Foreign military bases” is used here interchangeably or in connection with associated terms such as “foreign security bases,” “overseas security bases,” “foreign security arrangements,” “foreign security/military posts,” “foreign military alliances,” or “foreign security installations.”³ While these terms have slight differences, they are used in this chapter to broadly mean Africa-based external military establishments or posts that form part of global partnerships with African states with the claim to address security challenges in Africa.

While the exact number of military-related bases globally is not fully established in the literature (because of conceptual/definitional contentions),



1 the continent of Africa is considered to be hosting the most foreign mili-
2 tary-related posts established by various Western powers as well as Russia and
3 China. Presently, the African continent hosts more than sixty military-related
4 bases established by at least thirteen different foreign countries, mostly
5 competing global powers such as the United States, France, China, the UK,
6 Japan, Germany, the United Arab Emirates, Russia, Belgium, Italy, Saudi
7 Arabia, Turkey, and India.⁴ This phenomenon continues to grow because of
8 increasing bilateral agreements between some African Union (AU) member
9 states and foreign powers as part of economic and state stabilization sup-
10 port to African states in lieu of increasing economic challenges and security
11 dilemmas across the continent.⁵ Within this framing, military-related bases
12 in Africa are largely a response by foreign partners to specific local security
13 challenges in their operations while simultaneously serving as instruments
14 to pursue the interests of states that establish these military bases.

15 Yet this foreign influence on Africa's security architecture appears to
16 be in contrast with the AU's aim to offer "African solutions to African
17 problems," including homegrown policies to address security concerns.⁶ The
18 AU through its Peace and Security Council (PSC) expresses concerns about
19 possible consequences of this growing development on peace and security
20 on the continent and admonishes member states to be circumspect when
21 engaging in bilateral relations leading to the setting up of foreign military
22 posts and other matters relating to peace and security. In this regard, the AU
23 warns that the intense "external military deployment in the region, which is
24 driven by geopolitical, commercial, and military competition, largely with
25 negative effects on regional stability," is problematic.⁷ This issue has impli-
26 cations for both African security and the independence of African states,
27 especially because military bases raise issues of sovereign decision-making.
28 Despite the potential consequences of the proliferation of foreign security
29 bases, many African governments see these foreign countries as important
30 trading and security partners and engage in such related agreements with
31 them as a result.⁸

32 Africa has become increasingly important in the discourses and practices
33 on global security for some economic and political reasons. The continent
34 is host to 16 percent of the world's population and about 60 percent of
35 Africa's population is under the age of twenty-five. Besides, by 2050, Africa's
36 population is projected to be around two billion people.⁹ These statistics
37 have implications for a mix of important issues, including market poten-
38 tial, human resource development, (un)employment, and migration-related
39 issues, which together could seriously influence world order. This barrage
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of potential issues vis-à-vis the limited capacity of many African states and regional bodies has attracted competing interests from external powers to establish bases for military and other security operation centers across Africa. For example, Russian mercenaries are a notable force operating in Central African Republic, Mali and the Sahel, while China has a base in Djibouti. While it is obvious that this military presence is aimed at increasing the sphere of influence of Russia and China, the usual discourse of contributing to stabilizing the fragile security situation in the region and fighting terrorism and drug trafficking has mostly overwhelmed justifications for such military presence.

Besides these rationales, Linnéa Gelot and Adam Sandor raise other concerns, indicating that increasing cross-border crimes and insurgencies, regime-sponsored election violence, and other security dilemmas have attracted international military interventions and establishments in Africa as part of attempts to stabilize African polities and support security sector capacity-building.¹⁰ Foreign interventions are therefore becoming normal in the African contexts because respective states have not significantly addressed these concerns, largely because of the lack of state capacity and the complicity of regimes, especially those that use violence to remain in power.¹¹ Notably, many African countries face state security and human security challenges. These complexities exacerbate the economic and political dilemmas in Africa that attract external interest and action, generally to support transitions to stability, democracy, and economic development on the continent.¹²

Some accounts suggest that the proliferation of foreign military activities forms part of the glocalization of the understanding and practice of security and related matters of political and economic importance.¹³ Formally a common usage in business and international communication from the mid-twentieth century,¹⁴ the notion of localizing global norms, practices, and events and the reflection of local peculiarities in global spheres has also come to be used prominently in cognate disciplines within the social sciences. For instance, Roland Robertson argues that globalized security suggests the co-penetration of the so-called “global” and “local” in ways that the global is not seen predominantly as universal from elsewhere, while the local is not understood as contrasting global issues.¹⁵ This indicates that African countries’ embracement of foreign military bases is a consequence of the continued deterioration of world peace in the last decade and the attendant increase in military spending and militarized security in recent years, especially in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, and the Israel-Palestine war.¹⁶ Thus, foreign military bases form part of the

1 increasing search for collaborative solutions to solve local security concerns
2 in Africa as part of the attempts to combat global security challenges such
3 as conflicts, insurgencies, terrorism, and the general deterioration of the
4 liberal order. This glocalized way of addressing security challenges in Africa
5 is particularly compelling because of the manifest nested, transborder, and
6 trans-scaler nature of contemporary security dilemmas.¹⁷

7 However, other bodies of literature have offered critical appreciations
8 of the growing phenomenon of foreign security presence and installations in
9 Africa, including concerns of colonial/neocolonial posturing of foreign bases
10 and related military arrangements that sometimes undermine the sovereignty
11 of the state,¹⁸ foreign policy proxies for Western governments in Africa,¹⁹
12 the promotion of hegemonic world order thus power imbalances,²⁰ intense
13 geopolitical competition among external powers for agreements and bases in
14 the era of multipolarity in global politics with attendant problems of more
15 insecurity and instability in affected areas,²¹ and the promotion of illiberal
16 regimes and sustenance of state-sponsored violence.²²

17 This chapter contributes to the debates on the increasing glocaliza-
18 tion of security by examining how the phenomenon of foreign military
19 installations has affected the idea of African peace and security through the
20 regional organizations in charge of peace and security in the continent, using
21 the statement “African solutions to African problems”—African-centered
22 Solutions (AfSol). This is insightful for understanding both security issues
23 and state sovereignty in Africa. This chapter thus attempts to address one
24 broad question: how do the establishment and operation of foreign military
25 bases affect the performance of regional organizations and collaborative net-
26 works of institutions and actors in terms of peace and security in Africa?
27 To address this question, we examine the relevant scholarship and policy
28 frameworks on peace and security, regionalism, politics, and international
29 relations—all in conjunction with the issue of state sovereignty. We focus
30 on the related debates on foreign military bases, rooted in the interaction
31 between emergent global and local concerns and approaches to peace and
32 security, and the implications for peace and security and state sovereignty
33 in Africa. The chapter concludes that the phenomenon of foreign military
34 establishments and operations affects the pursuit of African regional security
35 by distorting the challenging idea of “African solutions to African problems”
36 in two important ways: it increases the overlaps and redundancy of struc-
37 tures in charge of peace and security and limits the potential to localize
38 continental security policies at the state and substate levels. All of this not
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only poses more security challenges, but also undermines the sovereignty of African states in an increasingly contentious global system.

In addressing these issues, the rest of the chapter is presented as follows. The chapter first provides background information about military bases and operations in Africa, followed by a section on the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) as the vehicle for attaining stability through Africa's initiative; solving Africa's security problems through the APSA in collaboration with the respective subregional organizations, and how it contributes to peace and stability in Africa. Following this is a discussion of how the intersection between the peace and security architecture within Africa's regional bodies and foreign military installations affects the discourse and practice of African security.

Foreign Military Bases in Africa

The idea and practice of having military bases overseas date back to ancient Greece and its city-states.²³ However, it was only in the twentieth century, from the late 1930s that overseas military bases in sovereign states gradually became a more accepted reality.²⁴ The history of modern military bases is traced to the hegemonic engagements by organizations such as NATO and the European Union (EU), whose overseas military installations partly provoked the current development regarding Russia and Ukraine. The Cold War between the two great powers, the Soviet Union (Russia) and United States, spurred a mass race for regional power from 1945 through 1991. When the Soviet Union disintegrated, the United States became a global hegemon in foreign military installations with little competition.²⁵ However, the contemporary rise to prominence of some historically nontraditional superpowers such as China, Brazil, India, and the Gulf states among others has increased competition for strategic geopolitical and economic partnership (which involves military bases in some cases), and most of such attention is drawn to Africa.

As indicated before, Africa attracts most of the foreign military bases largely because of the region's strategic proximity to the Middle East and Asia as well as the emergence of regional security complexity along the Red Sea among other economic and political reasons.²⁶ Historically, two foreign powers (the United States and France) have dominated the spaces of military bases and activities in Africa. As Himanshu Dubey notes, the

1 United States and France are in vanguard of operations on African soil.²⁷
2 These foreign militaries operate in crisis zones all over Africa, the most
3 recent instance being in northern Mozambique. However, the first phase of
4 US military bases in Africa ended in the 1970s, largely because of changes
5 in government and public pressure, which resulted in mass opposition
6 as the continent was undergoing the process of decolonization.²⁸ Before
7 this, however, the French had operated a similar model of security in the
8 continent in the nineteenth century. The idea of French military bases in
9 Africa could be traced back to the former French Interior Minister Charles
10 Pasque, who said, “European security strategy relies on three rings, namely,
11 the Mediterranean, the European continent and the Atlantic. France is the
12 only country that could play an active part in all the three rings.”²⁹ Later,
13 when France’s former colonies in Africa began to gain their independence,
14 notably during the 1960s, it started to sign bilateral treaties with its former
15 colonies, with a variety of degrees of military cooperation and support. One
16 of the commitments made in these treaties was to establish French military
17 bases, especially in former French colonies. Therefore, most of the opera-
18 tions involved in protecting French nationals and their allied governments
19 in Africa during the twentieth century used such bases.³⁰

20 Leaving aside the colonial period, foreign military and mercenaries
21 first appeared in Africa during the post-colonial/post-independence era. The
22 African continent embarked on a new phase of state formation and national
23 integration, with different external partners, where security support became
24 key in the stability of the modern state.³¹ As Pierre Englebert and Kevin
25 Dunn indicate, political instabilities, civil strife, and the rise of low-inten-
26 sity violence as well as the emergence of warlords in post-independence
27 Africa resulted in the expansion and proliferation of foreign troops and
28 mercenaries.³² The period between 1960 and 1990 has been relevant in this
29 context of statehood and foreign military support because of the political
30 transformation that occurred at the time and the resulting sociopolitical
31 realities.³³ Specifically, 1960 is known as the “Year of Africa” because of the
32 many events that occurred at that time—most notably the independence
33 of seventeen African countries—that emphasized the continent’s determi-
34 nation for autonomy to address important domestic political and economic
35 matters. However, the promise of solving Africa’s problems through African
36 efforts became a significant failure. In the aftermath of independence, many
37 civil disputes and political instabilities pushed the region’s socioeconomic
38 development into grave difficulties, attracting more foreign, global interests,
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which rather compounded the continent's security dilemmas resulting from
complexly entwined global and local politics.³⁴

Reflecting on the immediate post-colonial era, Robert Lloyd indicates
that the African continent beheld two conflicting realities: the euphoria of
independence and emancipation, and the difficulties for independent states
to forge their future, in particular, in preventing significant threats to the
authority of the state.³⁵ The latter has resulted in the emergence of foreign
military or mercenaries on the continent, where individual states have signed
various agreements with different foreign powers to boost the security of
the state. For instance, during the Year of Africa, Belgium, like Britain and
France, intended to flee Africa as soon as possible and granted Congo inde-
pendence (now the Democratic Republic of the Congo).³⁶ However, after
gaining independence, Congo was soon consumed by political instability,
secessionism, and violence.³⁷ In response to the Congolese conflicts, the
United Nations (UN) established its first enormous peacekeeping mission,
UN Operations in the Congo (Opération des Nations Unies au Congo, or
ONUC), in 1960.³⁸ When the UN agreed to send peacekeeping forces to
Congo, for instance, India played a key role by sending 4,700 personnel. As
a result, the number of mercenaries on the continent increased, and now the
continent hosts more than thirteen foreign countries that have a considerable
presence, especially in the Horn of Africa—not counting UN missions.³⁹

Africa is witnessing an increasing number of foreign military missions
and outposts. With around eleven foreign military bases, the Horn of Africa
has become the epicenter of foreign mercenaries. By 2021, forty-eight foreign
military bases were in Africa, with France and the United States having the
most bases.⁴⁰ While France took the lead in the early days of post-colonial
Africa, the United States has currently expanded its bases across the conti-
nent.⁴¹ Owing to the phenomenon of rising powers in the global political
and market economy linked with foreign bases, so-called nontraditional
superpowers such as China, Turkey, Japan, Belgium, and Saudi Arabia each
has a military base in Africa, all situated in East Africa, except Belgium,
whose military base was in West Africa, precisely in Mali. Presently, most
of these military bases are concentrated in East Africa and West Africa, with
each region having nineteen and sixteen foreign military bases, respectively.
Central Africa follows with eight bases, while North Africa and South Africa
host the fewest number of foreign military bases, with two bases and one
base, respectively. In terms of individual countries' statistics, Djibouti hosts
the highest number of bases with seven, followed by Niger with four. Soma-

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1 lia and Chad also host three bases each, while Kenya, Eritrea, Seychelles,
2 Burkina Faso, Senegal, Central African Republic (CAR), Gabon, and Libya
3 each hosts two bases. Ghana, Somaliland, Cameroon, Uganda, South Sudan,
4 Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritania, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC),
5 and Botswana each has one foreign military base or installation.

6 As indicated earlier, these military corporations have been hailed as
7 successful in meeting key political and economic needs that domestic gov-
8 ernments and international organizations no longer adequately fulfill.⁴² Along
9 the political line, the international system, which revolves around the realist
10 atmosphere where states are considered the major actors, and the potential
11 internal and external threats to the authority of the state largely inform the
12 setting up of foreign military and security bases in Africa to prevent crime
13 and create a peaceful coexistence. In line with this, the Horn of Africa and
14 the Red Sea regions have forged the most foreign military installation and
15 operation agreements across the continent because of the strategic geography
16 of these regions that connects the African and Asian continents and because
17 the Gulf is prone to security threats such as terrorism, human trafficking,
18 piracy, and cyberattacks, among others. Also, because of the large scale of
19 terrorist attacks or activities by weak tribal populations all over the continent,
20 the United States established several other bases across the continent in a
21 single voice of maintaining peace and stability on the continent. Similarly,
22 Russia expanded its military influence by providing training programs and
23 security agreements, and sales of arms to fragile states.⁴³ Thus, the territorial
24 integrity and the desire to ward off threats to internal security lie centrally
25 in the rationale of bilateral agreements that sometimes guarantee foreign
26 military installations in many parts of Africa.

27 On the economic front, foreign military presence in Africa is deemed
28 to be driven by the fact that some AU member states lease their territories
29 to foreign powers for military bases, mainly for domestic economic gains as
30 well as the strategic economic potential of the host country to the external
31 partner. For instance, Djibouti's hosting of Chinese military base generates
32 more than \$300 million annually for the East African country.⁴⁴ Besides,
33 Himanshu Dubey argues that China's military base in Djibouti should be
34 viewed as a means of China's economic interest and a ground for conducting
35 naval diplomacy by the Chinese government. Thus, the establishment of a
36 military base in Djibouti took place to strengthen diplomatic relations between
37 Djibouti, China, and Ethiopia, intending to construct the Ethio-Djibouti
38 Railway, the Ethiopia-Djibouti water pipeline, and Chinese investment in
39 Doarleh Multipurpose port.⁴⁵
40

However, some scholars have pointed out four potential negative implications of these broad economic and political rationales for the increasing militarization of security globally and the corresponding local effect of the presence of foreign military bases across Africa. These concerns touch on related matters: interference in domestic governance spaces, resource exploitation, colonial and neocolonial posturing and correspondent activities against the African partners, and the view of foreign security installations as an illegal practice being endorsed by global governance bodies such as the UN and partner regional organizations.

On the point of governance interference, a case is advanced that some foreign military bases in Africa usually interfere with host-country governance as a result of the oft-extensive military influence from foreign security partners who partly use foreign aid as baits as well. For instance, France had a military presence in Niger that was intimately related to the country's energy sector, and one in every three French light bulbs is fueled by uranium mines in Niger, where the foreign forces were stationed. Also, the US military serves as the world's gendarme, not for the benefit of the global community but for the benefactors of capitalism. For instance, the United States has 7,000 military personnel on rotational deployment housed in military outposts around Africa, including in Uganda, South Sudan, Senegal, Niger, Gabon, Cameroon, and, most importantly, DRC around the oil reserves.⁴⁶ In this context, Africa's history with colonial interference in domestic governance raises serious concerns about the sovereignty of African states in such security-related deals with external partners. Not surprisingly, we have seen hardline military regimes in the Sahel ask France and the United States to leave their countries.

Further, the increased attention on Africa by foreign mercenaries is also linked with the rising global competing interests in exploiting natural resources in the continent, where emerging global superpowers such as China, India, and the Gulf states have all demonstrated strong desires to influence domestic policies in foreign lands. In this instance, mercenaries are deemed to be the new face of neocolonialism in Africa in terms of resource exploitation, as the subsoil of Africa contains 98 percent of the world's chromium and 90 percent of the world's cobalt and other precious minerals such as bauxite, diamonds, tantalum, tungsten, and tin.⁴⁷ The failure of most African state governments to effectively harness resources that contribute between 30 percent and 50 percent of the continent's total wealth and drive people-centered development programs largely contributes to the constant dependency on foreign capital for development projects.⁴⁸ This attracts the

1 interest of foreign geostrategic powers such as the United States and France
2 to integrate military bases as part of foreign support agreements in many
3 parts of Africa. Thus, the leasing of territories by African governments for
4 military bases is mainly influenced by domestic economic gains as well as
5 some member states' proclivity to request external assistance in dealing with
6 serious security challenges.⁴⁹

7 Besides, some scholars posit that foreign military activities in Africa
8 have made the continent a battleground for hegemonic competition for
9 spaces of influence by foreign powers, with negative implications for the
10 security and stability of the continent, especially in the Sahel and the Horn
11 of Africa. For instance, the growing competition among these foreign gov-
12 ernments, particularly relating to their military bases and economic relations
13 with Africa, is transforming into a neo-Cold War on the continent. For
14 example, the intense competition between China and the United States for
15 territories for overseas military installations in Africa is central to their battle
16 for global hegemony.⁵⁰ In line with this view, some scholars have criticized
17 foreign military bases for using Africa as a battleground for hegemony and
18 not for the maintenance of peace and security.⁵¹ The general concern here,
19 thus, is that each external power uses foreign military bases as a way of
20 gaining influence and building global hegemony by gaining more possession
21 and alliance with African countries. From this dimension, foreign aid has
22 largely been used as payment for the right to establish military bases across
23 the continent to control its mineral resources. This partly explains why the
24 presence of US military bases in strategically significant regions such as those
25 bordering the Red Sea and the Gulf of Guinea is intensifying.

26 A final criticism of foreign military bases in Africa concerns the legit-
27 imacy of the practice. The prohibition on the use of force, as enshrined in
28 the UN Charter and customary international law, has been used to justify
29 the illegality of foreign military bases in Africa.⁵² When it comes to military
30 involvement, one of the most serious issues is legality, and one of the corner-
31 stones of the modern international legal order is the prohibition of the threat
32 or use of force. In fact, Article 2(4) of the UN Charter expressly prohibits UN
33 member states from using force against another state's territorial integrity or
34 political sovereignty, or in any other way that is incompatible with the UN's
35 objectives.⁵³ For instance, in 2018, intellectuals, academics, and social activists
36 criticized the US-Ghana Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) as a threat to
37 state integrity. This atmosphere of resistance is reflected, for instance, in most
38 West African countries, where the public is becoming increasingly hostile
39 to the expansion of foreign military bases in the subregion.⁵⁴ Large crowds
40 took to the streets in Accra in March 2018 to protest the proposed SOFA, a

twenty-million-dollar agreement that would allow the US military to expand its presence in Ghana. Opposition parties, concerned about the possibility of the United States establishing a military base in the country, took part in these protests in parliament. Many described it as a threat to state sovereignty, a roadmap to the collapse of the state.⁵⁵ A key concern of the protesters is that many of these foreign establishments have contributed to more security dilemmas in some countries, like Somalia and DRC, pushing them further into states of fragility and collapse.⁵⁶ Relatedly, such military installations and operations are also regarded as invasive, which is illegal per international laws about the sovereignty of the state.⁵⁷

The African Peace and Security Architecture

The APSA represents the overarching framework for approaching issues of security and governance in Africa. As captured by the AU Peace and Security Department, “APSA is built around structures, objectives, principles and values, as well as decision-making processes relating to the prevention, management and resolution of crises and conflicts, post-conflict reconstruction and development in the continent.”⁵⁸ APSA is under the AU’s PSC, which was adopted in July 2002 in Durban and came into force in 2003. It is the PSC that serves as the link between the AU on the one hand and the UN and other stakeholders and external partners on the other hand on matters of continental peace and security. As its main pillar, the PSC outlines the various functions of the APSA, which are performed under the Commission, the Panel of the Wise (PoW), the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS), the African Standby Force (ASF), and the Peace Fund. The key functions of the APSA, as mandated under the PSC protocol, include (i) early warning and conflict prevention; (ii) peacemaking, peace support operations, peacebuilding, and post-conflict reconstruction and development; (iii) promotion of democratic practices, good governance, and respect for human rights; and (iv) humanitarian action and disaster management.⁵⁹ These functions are performed under the AU in collaboration with the continents’ five main subregions, namely the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), and the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU).⁶⁰

As the embodiment or directorate of Africa’s formula for continental peace and security, therefore, the APSA is deemed to be at the center of the

1 discourses and practices about peace, security, and development in the African
 2 continent. APSA and other AU mechanisms such as the New Partnership for
 3 Africa's Development (NEPAD), Elections and Governance (ACDEG), and
 4 the African Charter on Democracy (ACD), established for the promotion of
 5 good governance and democracy, are "driven not only by the genuine need to
 6 promote human security, democracy, and good governance in African countries,
 7 but also by the strategic desire of African leaders to assert African agency in
 8 African affairs and thereby thwart the application of Western global liberal
 9 governance in Africa."⁶¹ This means that the related activities surrounding
 10 foreign military bases pose important implications for African agency, thus
 11 the discourses and practices of peace and security in Africa.

12 The discourses on African peace and security are reflected in three
 13 broad themes. First is the state-centered, largely liberalist view, which favors
 14 the state and regional and multistate organizations and Western models
 15 in the pursuit of a stable Africa. Here, the focus is on restructuring and
 16 strengthening liberal-oriented institutions such as state military and security
 17 apparatuses, capacity building for modern law courts, democratization, and
 18 liberal economic policies among other related ideals.⁶² In contrast, the sec-
 19 ond theme is a broad understanding of the African philosophy of peace and
 20 security, mainly through so-called long-standing indigenous or traditional
 21 African approaches. This view argues for the maintenance of peace and order
 22 using the African knowledge systems through indigenous institutions such
 23 as chieftaincy, community cultural representations, and other indigenous
 24 settings and procedures as against liberal ideals, which are believed to be
 25 largely incongruent with African traditional practices of peace.⁶³ On the third
 26 theme, hybridity is encouraged, involving the embracing of both liberal and
 27 traditional approaches in the pursuit of peace and security and a fusing of
 28 African regional peace operations and external forces through the UN and
 29 other partner states for peace operations.⁶⁴

30 While all these dimensions of the discourses and associated practices
 31 have reflected in Africa, the decades of deteriorating security in the continent
 32 have piled immense pressure on the AU and allied subregional organizations
 33 and member states as the primary providers of peace in the modern inter-
 34 national governance sphere, which involves modular and multidimensional
 35 approaches.⁶⁵ Thus, like the traditional philosophy on peace and security,
 36 the regional bodies through the APSA have upheld the idea of "African
 37 solutions to African problems," for instance, as captured in Article 3(b) of
 38 the Constitutive Act of the AU (2003),⁶⁶ which indicates that the AU is
 39 mandated to "defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence
 40 of its Member States."⁶⁷ This "implies that this is the time for Africans to

take things into their own hands and make use of their resources to solve Africa's troubles," especially for "African states to take personal responsibility for preserving peace and stability."⁶⁸

While the idea of African solutions to African problems emerged as part of a strong consensus among African leaders (since the formation of the Organisation of African Unity) and policy and academic actors to reverse the trend of marginalization and exploitation of the continent through centuries-old issues of slavery, colonialism (and neocolonialism), oppression, war, and hunger among other hindrances caused by asymmetric global forces,⁶⁹ this self-help idea and associated practices have attracted varying reactions in academic and policy discussions on peace and security in Africa, most of which are critical about the capacity of the AU and subregional bodies to autonomously or with little external support ensure peace and stability in the continent.⁷⁰ While the AU and especially Regional Economic Communities (RECs) have contributed significantly to stability in many parts of the continent, many scholars are concerned about key long-standing flaws of the AU, such as limited resource capacity due to poor and weak economies.⁷¹ Besides, the weak political/structural and cultural integration of member states, due to colonial legacies, ideological and related differences, as well as the challenge of hegemonic regional players all hinder the AU's potential to effectively promote peace and stability.⁷²

These conditions, therefore, paved the way for the influx of foreign mercenaries into the continent to boost the capacity of state and regional organizations.⁷³ However, Paul Williams and Arthur Boutellis further argue that the embracing of foreign military activities in Africa seems to weaken or erode the capacity of the AU and RECs to maintain peace and security on the continent, with such foreign-local security collaborations partly compounding insecurities within the region. Such glocalized security concerns in Africa, for instance, were witnessed in November 1970 when Guinea experienced an attempted invasion by Portuguese mercenaries in the country.⁷⁴ Although foreign troops are targeted at fighting security dilemmas such as terrorism, which poses a threat to international peace and security (especially after the 9/11 attacks), some of those local-international military operations have been cited for establishing links with terrorists in some parts of the continent.⁷⁵ This has partly made it very difficult for the AU and RECs to fight security threats and provide peace, thus the increasing reliance on foreign security establishments with local collaboration, mostly linked with economic support for respective African states and organizations.

Yet there are concerns about the economic dangers of Africa's reliance on foreign military support in Africa. For instance, in 2017 more than ten

1 African countries, including Senegal, Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Liberia, Ghana,
 2 Nigeria, South Africa, Kenya, Ethiopia, and Djibouti, received US Foreign
 3 Military Financing (FMF). The FMF, to be paid either as grants or loans,
 4 was “to provide means for stabilization, counter-terrorism, counternarcotics,
 5 coalition operations, interoperability and military relations” and enable partner
 6 countries to purchase “U.S. defense articles, services and training.”⁷⁶ Yet such
 7 military-related financing and the associated foreign military bases in Africa
 8 have harmed the ability of the AU and RECs to find solutions to both
 9 economic and security issues by putting the continent under an unending
 10 reliance on foreign aid for economic recovery and peacekeeping activities.
 11 The AU is still significantly reliant on outside funding and resources for its
 12 peacekeeping activities.

13 However, the reliance of the AU on outside money and resources
 14 for its operations, especially peacekeeping, has hampered the organization’s
 15 ability to make independent, strategic, and tactical decisions, which raises
 16 African state sovereignty issues. For example, African states contribute only
 17 2 percent of the cost of the AU’s peace and security operations, whereas
 18 outside donors such as the EU provide 98 percent. Consequently, the PSC’s
 19 ability to establish its agenda has been weakened by the expanding presence
 20 of foreign military bases and their participation in political and security
 21 matters on the continent.⁷⁷ Therefore, the AU’s role in maintaining peace
 22 and security has been hampered and, in some cases, taken over by these
 23 foreign military outposts, while the agency of African states remains weak.
 24 However, foreign military bases have largely failed to reflect positively in
 25 terms of contributing to successful peacekeeping missions and a sustained
 26 peaceful political atmosphere, the primary reasons for African countries’
 27 embracing of foreign military bases in their territories.⁷⁸ Adding to the
 28 important implications of foregoing discussions on security, development,
 29 and broadly regional integration, this chapter calls further attention to how
 30 foreign military bases affect the discourses and practices associated with this
 31 idea of a self-help approach to African peace and security.

32 33 34 Foreign Military and Security Bases and 35 Peace and Security in Africa 36

37 Despite the burgeoning literature on the potential and manifest effects of
 38 foreign security bases on African countries, the related debates have not ade-
 39 quately addressed how the idea of homegrown solutions to African security
 40

challenges is shaped by the increasing external interests in Africa's security affairs. As we argue, external military bases impede the African solutions to African problems approach to African security. This problem is reflected in the compounding overlaps and redundancy of peace and security structures and the hindering of effective localizing of continental security policies at the state and substate levels.

OVERLAPS AND REDUNDANCIES OF PEACE AND SECURITY STRUCTURES

The growing interest by African countries in hosting foreign military bases as part of global partnerships to combat emerging complex security challenges has important implications for the effective functioning of the existing peace and security structures in Africa. Thus, the increasing number of actors—mainly state, multistate, international, and civil society players—and the corresponding institutional, normative, and associational leanings is a compelling topic in contemporary discussions on African politics, security, and development because this phenomenon causes overlapping bureaucracies, structures, and procedures that stifle effective security operations.⁷⁹ As we demonstrate subsequently, the various foreign security pacts and establishments in strategic and sensitive jurisdictions in Africa creates disharmonies and structural overlaps in AU and RECs partnerships, RECs and state partnerships, AU and/or RECs, and UN and other multinational organizations' partnerships. For instance, APSA's two main levels of operationalization, continental and subregional, reflect challenging structural arrangements that breed competition, non-correspondence, duplications, and ambiguities in the structures and functions of the AU and RECs. These are further challenged by the individual nations' signing of various security pacts with different global powers, with some conditions not in the full interest of the regional and subregional statutes.

On the aspect of competition, while there exist some examples of complementarity, unhealthy competitions also characterize the interactions between the AU and UN Security Council, the AU and RECs, and among member states within the respective RECs in peacekeeping operations and other security and political arrangements.⁸⁰ Besides, the multiple structures with similar tasks from continental to subregional organizations create duplications, non-correspondence, and ambiguities in the roles to be performed. Alex Vines exemplifies this structural non-correspondence between the APSA and at least five of the eight existing RECs within the AU. He observes that, for instance, while ECOWAS and SADC both have a security arm integrated

1 within its structure, each of the Common Market for East and Southern
2 Africa (COMESA) and the East African Community (EAC) does not have
3 security elements or a comprehensive regional membership. Consequently,
4 the responsibility to coordinate the East Africa Brigade (EASBRIG) was
5 ceded to IGAD. Yet Rwanda, Seychelles, and Madagascar are not members
6 of IGAD, leading to the establishment of a new EASBRIG mechanism to
7 address the lapses.⁸¹ Alex Vines stresses that such related matters cause a
8 subsidiary mismatch, underperformance, and noncommitment of member
9 states and RECs to regional or continental duties among others.⁸² Therefore,
10 the expansion of foreign military agreements, thus AU's security alliances
11 with NATO, China, and the United States among others, and member
12 states' different external security pacts, for instance, Mali and Niger's mil-
13 itary agreements with France and Russia's military pacts with Nigeria and
14 Ethiopia,⁸³ pose negative implication for continental and subcontinental
15 security structures. That is, these collaborations invariably contribute to the
16 structural tensions and overlaps that negatively impact on the effectiveness of
17 peace and security structures in the continent. A recent, key example of the
18 structural overlaps and tensions is reflected in how the Biden administration
19 prioritizes a strengthening of twenty-seven US outposts in Africa, while the
20 US Africa command (Africom) sees counterterrorism in the Horn of Africa
21 and the Sahel regions as Africa's topmost concern.⁸⁴

22 Similarly, structural overlaps and tensions also create ambiguities in
23 APSA's mandate on security operations with member states and RECs. For
24 instance, international law grants RECs autonomy in their relationship with
25 the AU in terms of peace and security operations. However, AU's Constitu-
26 tive Act also grants the continental body the powers to first sanction such
27 operations of the RECs. Yet there is no provision of a caveat in interna-
28 tional law concerning under what conditions, for instance, RECs could act
29 without consent from the AU in terms of peace and security operations.
30 Although these ambiguous operations have brought some compliance over
31 the decades, they have also led to cases where the RECs have acted ahead
32 of and without sanction from the AU. For example, the AU only played
33 a catch-up role in ECOWAS efforts during the crisis in Mali in 2012.⁸⁵
34 Similarly, the failure of ECOWAS to act decisively on Mali's controversial
35 agreements with the Wagner group of mercenaries linked with Moscow, for
36 instance, also indicates the ambiguousness of RECs' role in dealing with
37 such related security agreements and operations within existing regional
38 peace and security structures.

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These prevalent structural tensions and incoherence have two broad serious implications in the era of growing foreign military establishments in Africa. First, foreign military agreements in Africa could exacerbate different stances on matters of security. As most of such partnerships are linked with economic benefits, coupled with other factors such as ideological, cultural, and political differences, host countries will increasingly have inconsistent stances within the respective RECs. Besides, volatile regions, for instance within IGAD and ECOWAS, would most likely adopt different positions from relatively stable regions within SADC and the Maghreb region concerning the nature of agreements with external partners in terms of security installations and operations. Second, the foreign security bases are invariably adding to the bureaucratic overlaps that characterize the AU and RECs. This follows the intense glocalization of militarized human security in Africa, coupled with the fact that member states and regional actors taking part in such security arrangements face potential dilemmas of enabling those agreements to rival or usurp juridical powers of the existing regional organizations or add more challenging bureaucracy to the structures in charge of peace and security. These compound the tensions, ambiguities, redundancies, and ineffectiveness in the collaborations between RECs and the AU and related multinational organizations on peace and security in Africa.

LIMITED LOCALIZATION OF CONTINENTAL SECURITY POLICIES

The growing phenomena of foreign security agreements in Africa could further promote the prevalent situation of the limited reflection of regional security frameworks at the local level and national and subnational arenas.⁸⁶ In other words, foreign military agreements will potentially embolden the predominantly elite and state-centric view of security that has produced minimal results on the ground in contemporary times.⁸⁷ With the US-led global stabilization mission (post-9/11), which involves the militarization of security, including in Africa,⁸⁸ the mandates of foreign military bases usually target so-called threats to the authority of the state and territorial integrity. Indeed, some key nontraditional security issues, such as the liberalization agenda on democracy, human rights and human security,⁸⁹ civil society's roles in peace and security,⁹⁰ and climate and environmental security have been reflected in regional peace and security arrangements.⁹¹ However, the largely traditional view and practice of security in foreign security arrangements in Africa could compound the already failed attempts to translate regional

1 and subregional norm regimes and thus peace and security frameworks to
2 the ground, where the impact is usually felt the most.⁹²

3 This top-down, elite-centered, and state-oriented nature of foreign
4 security operations in Africa poses a further challenge to the long-standing
5 difficulty of reflecting regional norms on the ground. This means that with
6 the promise of foreign security arrangements to address security crises,
7 especially in the Horn of Africa and the Sahelian regions of the continent,⁹³
8 more concentration is likely to be on external models, strategies, and views
9 of security being forged with local elites, as already being witnessed, which is
10 usually not in synch with local realities.⁹⁴ This further reduces the potential
11 of African citizens' understanding and practice of "African solution to African
12 problems" as framed and diffused through APSA's collaboration with RECs.
13 The bottom line here is that while there is an increasing realization of local
14 realities, for instance, in China's strategic reframing of established norms
15 on security and development to gain legitimacy in its security operations
16 in Africa,⁹⁵ the elite-centered and interest-based engagements of foreign
17 security-related activities pose a serious threat to the efforts to localize the
18 discourses and practices of African peace and security by African citizens.
19 While Emmanuel Bombande suggests that the growing civil society contri-
20 bution to regional security matters indicates some intent by regional and
21 national actors to translate such norms to the masses,⁹⁶ Christian Ani asserts
22 that conscious efforts are not made to localize regional and global security
23 norms and practices because of local elites' co-option of peace and security
24 programs and the RECs and AU's overreliance on international support.⁹⁷
25 Therefore, foreign security arrangements in Africa could potentially weaken
26 the promise of bottom-up peace and security in the continent.

27 28 29 Conclusion: Glocalized Security, State Sovereignty, 30 and the Practice of Security 31

32 The chapter sets out to examine how the rising number of foreign security
33 bases on the continent—a reflection of glocalized militarization of secu-
34 rity—affects the discourse and practice of African security through the
35 famous phrase "African solutions to African problems," which raises issues of
36 state sovereignty in Africa. Indeed, Africa has become an epicenter of global
37 attempts to localize the US-led stabilization mission to fight contemporary
38 security dilemmas. In this move to apply and reconcile external norms to
39 the African terrain to address political instability in the continent, one of
40

the key partnerships that are usually formed involves the establishment of foreign military and security bases in strategic parts of the continent through bilateral agreements with African states. The establishment of foreign military bases has become a growing phenomenon characterized by the competition among traditional and emerging global powers for territories. While potentially contributing to global order, in the predominant claim to address security volatilities in Africa, foreign security bases also become strategic spheres of global political and economic influence. This trend of competition among foreign powers for security alliances in the continent may keep increasing, given the resource endowment, market potential, and geostrategic location of Africa, especially the eastern and western parts of the continent. Consequently, the establishment and operations of foreign security bases have added to the existing bureaucracies in charge of peace and security on the continent. At the same time, the sovereignty of African states becomes increasingly precarious without necessarily adding to the efficacy of pan-African peace and security mechanisms.

This chapter shows that the glocalized view and practice of security, which embrace foreign military bases in Africa, further complicate the existing difficulty in reconciling global and continental norms of peace and security to local realities in Africa. This poses serious implications for the pursuit of African regional security, as it distorts the challenging idea of “African solutions to African problems” in two important ways. First, the corresponding security arrangements further increase the overlaps and redundancies of structures in charge of peace and security. This exacerbates the weaknesses of the AU and subregional bodies in providing coordinated, committed, and proactive peace and security support in the continent. Second, external security arrangements in Africa limit the potential to localize continental security policies at the state and substate levels. This is caused by the militarized and elite-centered approach to peace and security through such agreements with foreign governments, which reduces genuine engagements with the masses to promote endogenous norms on African peace and security as captured in AU’s Agenda 2063 and other regional peace and security frameworks. Therefore, foreign military bases pose a grave potential to further hinder the proper functioning of African-owned security structures and processes, increasing the dilemmas surrounding the continent’s prevalent security threats, and in worse cases undermining the sovereignty of African states.

In the end, glocalization provides a lens for examining the African state through the domestic and external drivers of securitization and the

1 implications for state sovereignty. Indeed, African states have faced significant
 2 challenges in maintaining peace. Despite the AU efforts, the pan-African
 3 and regional security mechanisms still lack full capacity, especially because
 4 of poor logistics and funding. These deficits in African security, coupled
 5 with the growing domestic and external threats to state security and human
 6 security in Africa, have reinvigorated the external military involvement in
 7 Africa, notably through the establishment of military bases under bilateral
 8 agreements that feed into geopolitical competition among major powers and
 9 elite economic and political interests in African states. All of these point to
 10 how the sovereignty of African states becomes even more vulnerable under
 11 dubious neocolonial and geopolitical agendas. This chapter goes back to
 12 the fundamental question of pan-African security through the APSA and
 13 how bilateral agreements by African states to host foreign military bases
 14 may effectively undermine the effort to have African solutions to African
 15 problems and assert African agency in security matters within Africa. This
 16 becomes a problem not only for the AU and the RECs, but also for the
 17 states that are hosting foreign military bases, especially as domestic political
 18 and economic calculations of those states change. Once foreign military bases
 19 are fully entrenched, state sovereignty becomes increasingly vulnerable and
 20 human security remains a major challenge.

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