



# INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL FOR SECURITY FORCES

## RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION CENTER

### INSIGHT

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## The European Peace Facility: what prospects for Africa?

In the 21st century, Human Development in society depends on a number of factors, including peace and security, considered as common and public goods<sup>1</sup>. However, many African countries have seen these "goods" compromised by the various crises and conflicts, as they constitute a breeding ground for such threats. In the context of international solidarity, the so-called developed countries of the North have always mobilized to support the continent known as the cradle of humanity. This explains the European Union's (EU) concern for Africa since 2004, through a number of peace and security support programs, notably the European Peace Facility (EPF).

The purpose of this Insight Note is to shed light on the EPF and its prospects for Africa. As a support and accompaniment program for peace and security issues, the EPF, in contrast to its predecessors, is undergoing profound adjustments to bring it into line with the reality of peace and security needs worldwide, and particularly in Africa.

### I. From the Althea Mechanism to the European Peace Facility (EPF): setting the scene

In 2003, the European Union came up with the idea of creating a new fund to finance operational, military and security actions in Europe and around the world, particularly in Africa. The specific feature of this fund was that it was outside the European Union budget. The aim was to put the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) into practice, by giving it a little more means of action in the field.<sup>2</sup>

On 1 March 2004, this idea was put into practice when the Council of the European Union created the ALTHEA mechanism. The context was favorable for such an initiative, as the EU was then engaged in eleven peace support missions in Africa. In addition to these, there was also an African Union (AU) mission,<sup>3</sup> with financial and

<sup>2</sup> The initial sum mobilized is around 5 billion euros, not included in the EU budget. See Federico Santopinto and Julien Maréchal, "L'assistance militaire de l'Union européenne à l'aune de la nouvelle Facilité Européenne pour la Paix", GRIP, January 2021, p.7. [https://www.observatoire-boutros-ghali.org/sites/default/files/Note\\_OBG\\_FEP.pdf](https://www.observatoire-boutros-ghali.org/sites/default/files/Note_OBG_FEP.pdf), site accessed on August 19, 2023 at 6:15 am.

<sup>3</sup> The African Union Mission in Darfur (Sudan). It lasted from December 2005 to July 2007, and was in fact a civil-

<sup>1</sup> Ruben P. Mendez, *Peace as a Global Public Good*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1999, pp. 382-416.

logistical support from the EU. On European soil, we had the EUFOR ALTHEA mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In concrete terms, funds from the ALTHEA mechanism financed European peace operations in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Chad, the Central African Republic on two occasions, Libya, and so on. In addition, there was the EUMAM military assistance mission in the Central African Republic, and three EUTM training missions in Mali, the Central African Republic and Somalia. On the maritime front, EU naval forces were deployed off the Horn of Africa, in the southern Mediterranean and off the Libyan coast as part of the EUNAVFOR Med Sophia missions<sup>4</sup>.

From the first half of the 2010 decade, and at the request of the European Parliament<sup>5</sup>, These European missions were replaced by assistance and training missions (EUMAM and EUTM), with the aim of assisting African partners in building their capacities, rather than intervening directly on the front line.

In 2013, at the Maputo Summit, the AU seized the opportunity offered by the Cotonou Agreement signed in 2000 to request that the ALTHEA mechanism be replaced by the African Peace Facility (APF). This is a new mechanism financed directly by EU member states and institutionally attached to the European Development Fund (EDF). The APF mechanism financed AU peace support operations. It provided financial support for the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) by

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military support operation. AMIS was replaced on July 31, 2007 by the United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID).

<sup>4</sup> EUNAVFOR is a European military operation in the Mediterranean Sea launched in June 2015 to stem the waves of young Africans migrating across the Mediterranean to Europe. On this subject, read Hervé Bléjean, "EUNAVFOR Med Sophia : opération militaire européenne en Mer Méditerranée", in *Défense Nationale*, 2016/4 (No 789), pp: 54-60. <https://doi.org/10.3917/rdna.789.0054>, accessed August 20, 2023 at 5:22 a.m.

<sup>5</sup> In view of the profound change in insecurity in Africa, marked by the rise in power of religious fundamentalist armed groups linked to the Jihad.

strengthening the institutional capacities of the pan-African organization, as well as those of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in the field of peace and security. The overall rationale for such support was that of "African solutions to African problems"<sup>6</sup>. It was in this context that the APF provided financial support for the operations of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in Guinea-Bissau and the Gambia, the Multinational Joint Force (MNJTF) in the Lake Chad region and the G5 Sahel Joint Force.

One of the specific features of the APF was its transitional nature, and the possibility of redirecting funds previously earmarked for development to African peace and security projects, particularly in their human resource capacity-building component. This reorientation of actions took place with the approval not only of European donor countries, but above all of the AU. However, as part of the funding of certain peace support operations, for instance, and on an ad hoc basis, APF funds were "used to pay the living expenses of deployed soldiers, but not their salaries"<sup>7</sup>.

Since July 2021, the APF has taken over the partial financing of military operations, following a transfer to the European Peace Facility (EPF). The civilian component of peace support operations on African soil is now included in the EU's overall budget through the Neighborhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI), known as "Global Europe"<sup>8</sup>. By the same token, the support provided to the

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<sup>6</sup> Federico Santopinto et Julien Maréchal, *L'assistance militaire de l'Union européenne...*, p. 12. [https://www.observatoire-boutrosghali.org/sites/default/files/Note\\_OBG\\_FEP.pdf](https://www.observatoire-boutrosghali.org/sites/default/files/Note_OBG_FEP.pdf), site consulté le 19 août 2023 à 6h15.

<sup>7</sup> Samuel Longuet and Clémence Buchet-Couzy, "La Facilité européenne pour la paix", Fondation Konrad Adenauer, 2022, p. 12.

<sup>8</sup> Beatrix Immenkamp, European Commission, *The Peace Facility for Africa - Annual Report 2020*, p. 7.

AU via the APSA should continue until 2024, when it will be definitively taken over by the EPF.

## **II. The 2021 move to mark an innovative EPF**

From a functional and organizational point of view, the EPF presents a number of innovations compared with the APF. Through it, the EU interacts directly with African states via their defense and security forces, without involving the African Union. The same applies to direct action in support of Peace Support Operations on the African continent. Moreover, the EPF's scope of action has expanded beyond the African continent. It now acts in all countries of the world, with a real "possibility of supplying lethal weapons to partner security forces"<sup>9</sup>, in compliance with the provisions of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT).

From an institutional point of view, the EPF is now entirely at the heart of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) implemented jointly by the Council of the European Union and the European External Action Service (EEAS). With the increase in budgetary expenditure due to the crisis in Ukraine since February 2022, its budget has risen by the end of 2022 from EUR 5.692 billion to EUR 7.979 billion. This is due to the fact that more than 86% of the EUR 5.692 billion budget initially voted in 2021 for the period from 2021 to 2027 has been used up, as a result of the demands imposed by the Russian-Ukrainian conflict<sup>10</sup>. The impact of the war in Ukraine on the EPF budget runs the risk of seeing security issues on the African continent relegated to second place in the European Union's concerns, as this war is taking place on European soil, and therefore in the EU's immediate vicinity.

However, it should be noted that while the EPF is innovative, it does not revolutionize the

fundamentals of the European Union's security policy.

It is part of Europe's "integrated approach". In particular, the decision is based on the 2016 EU Global Strategy, which presented the integrated approach as "multidimensional", "phased", "multi-level" and "multilateral". The decision also refers to the Council Conclusions on the Integrated Approach of January 2018 and to the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the EU and the AU in May 2018, which also makes a reference to it.<sup>11</sup>

It is therefore an absolute match for the ambitions of a global approach to safety and development.

## **III. The EPF and prospects for Africa**

Both the ALTHEA mechanism and the APF have greatly benefited Africa in financing its various peace and security initiatives. This is the case, for example, of the APSA and numerous other peace support operations deployed on the continent. Through these programs, the EU positioned itself as the AU's main financial partner. However, despite its positive contributions, the introduction of the EPF does raise a number of concerns in terms of Africa's prospects, given its global nature. Africa is no longer the EU's main, or even the only, target in terms of peace support.

The apprehensions aroused by the transition from APF to EPF are rooted in previous experience of APF budget management, in that:

The EU allocated EUR 3.61 billion to the ALTHEA mechanism and the FPA between 2004 and 2020. Of this amount, it contracted EUR 3.43 billion and disbursed EUR 3.01 billion <sup>12</sup>.

However, the EPF budget does not include a specific envelope for financing peace and

<sup>9</sup> Samuel Longuet and Clémence Buchet-Couzy, " La Facilité européenne pour la paix ", p. 12.

<sup>10</sup>Samuel Longuet and Clémence Buchet-Couzy, " La Facilité européenne pour la paix ", p. 13.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> European Commission, The Africa Peace Facility Annual Report, 2020, p.24.

security initiatives on the African continent,<sup>13</sup> despite the EU's formal political commitment to continue funding the AU's PSOs.

The integration of the AU's peace and security programs into the NDICI-Global Europe is not likely to reassure the African side either. This is all the more worrying when we consider that as early as 2017, and despite protests from the African side, the EU had reduced its financial support for the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) by 20%. The expressed aim was to encourage the AU to increase its financial independence in matters of peace and security. In a report published in 2018, the European Court of Auditors also criticized the effectiveness of EU support for African peace and security. It recommended that:

the AU should be encouraged to strengthen its participation in APSA so as to make it financially independent, and EU aid should be refocused on capacity-building measures rather than on financing operational costs.<sup>14</sup>

In response, the AU set up a self-financing mechanism for its peace and security initiatives called the "African Union Peace Fund". Unfortunately, recovery of this fund has been slow, and thus the pan-African organization is not yet in a position to free itself from foreign financial dependence, particularly on the EU.

At the same time, it is clear that the importance attached to the AU in the APF is reduced in the EPF. For example, the prior approval of the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) required for the financing of certain peace and security initiatives under the APF is no longer a guarantee under the EPF. Collaboration between the AU and the EU on peace issues is also no longer an obligation, as provided for in the agreement signed by the two organizations in 2018.

The backdrop to this reduction in the AU's role in the EPF is the EU's ambition to no longer be seen as a donor, but rather as a fully-fledged player in peace and security issues in Africa<sup>15</sup>.

By bypassing the AU, the EPF also makes it easier for Europeans to fund ad hoc coalitions rather than AU PSOs. In such coalitions, troop-contributing countries take on many more expenses, making it financially more attractive to support this type of operations. Another advantage is to avoid duplicating bureaucratic processes (and hence delays) between the EU and the AU. This is one of the reasons why a number of African states have not taken a dim view of the possibility for the EU to finance support for operations or military forces in Africa without going through the AU<sup>16</sup>.

From this point of view, the EPF claims to provide a faster means of accessing funding, as it offers the possibility of avoiding administrative or procedural delays. As foreign and security policy decisions are taken unanimously within AU bodies, this support for the new EPF from some African states prevents the AU as an organization from protesting against the reduction of its role. This may explain the absence of any African protest against the EPF at the EU-AU summit in February 2022<sup>17</sup>.

It is therefore entirely legitimate for the EPF to have aroused apprehensions among African leaders, who seem to see in it a renunciation by Europeans of support for peace on the continent, especially as a discrepancy between their respective interests and objectives is becoming increasingly apparent. This could be seen in the fact that, while the EU is focusing on the pacification of the Sahel and the Horn of Africa, which are the main migration routes to Europe, the AU is focusing its attention on the Great Lakes region, which is highly tense. An

<sup>13</sup> Including Peace Support Operations (PSOs), APSA and the AU's Rapid Response Mechanism.

<sup>14</sup> The European Court of Auditors, *The African Peace and Security Architecture: the need to refocus EU support*, Special Report submitted under Art. 287(4)(2) TFEU, 2018.

<sup>15</sup> Volker Hauck and LidetTadesseShiferaw, "How can we judge the AU-EU partnership on peace and security", *ECDPM Great Insight*, vol. 9, no. 3, 2020, p. 29.

<sup>16</sup> Samuel Longuet and Clémence Buchet-Couzy, "La Facilité européenne pour la paix", p. 25

<sup>17</sup> Samuel Longuet and Clémence Buchet-Couzy, "La Facilité européenne pour la paix", p. 25

illustration of this is provided by the EU's 2022 Strategic Compass, which states that:

Stability in the Gulf of Guinea, the Horn of Africa and in the Mozambique Channel remains a major security imperative for the EU, also as they are key trade routes <sup>18</sup>.

In conclusion, it should be noted that at the time of the EPF's creation, the financing of peace and security operations on African soil was facing numerous difficulties, compounded by the impact of COVID19 and the Russian-Ukrainian war. In spite of this, and despite the media focus and the cyclical prioritization of funding towards Ukraine since 2022, Africa remains the main beneficiary of EPF assistance measures, just as the African Union remains the main beneficiary of EPF. What's more, the quality of bilateral assistance provided by some EU countries to African countries affected by crisis or conflict has improved. Such a reality delegitimizes concerns about a possible marginalization of the AU by the EU in matters of peace and security. Continuing to entertain the idea of EU disengagement from security projects could also undermine AU-initiated dialogue and mediation efforts, in favor of a European approach more geared towards strengthening the security apparatus of certain African States.

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<sup>18</sup> Council of the European Union, A strategic compass for security and defense, 7371/22, 21 March 2022, p. 10.