

## AFRICA'S GEOPOLITICS AND SILENCING THE GUNS: AU - EU SECURITY ALLIANCE

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### Abstract

At the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the African continent has witnessed major developments in connection to its peace and security as well as economic and geopolitical landscape. The socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the resurgence of unconstitutional changes of governments (UCG), the spread and intensification of the threat of terrorism, outbreak of new major armed conflicts in countries such as Sudan, inter-state tensions and increasing concerns of potential state to state confrontations, and shifting geopolitical alliances are some of the major, interrelated trends that have marked the recent reality of the continent. Faced with these complex challenges at a time when the current global order centred around multilateralism has fallen into question, the African Union (AU) finds itself at a critical point where it needs to demonstrate effective leadership, not only to reassert its legitimacy by addressing the compounded challenges that confront Africa, but also to enhance its security alliance system in pursue of its silencing the guns goals. Utilizing an analytically qualitative methodology, this research examine the EU-AU strategies combating conflicting conflict in the continent of Africa in juxtaposing the current geo-political reality in Africa and to bring to limelight the resolution of the 6<sup>th</sup> EU-AU Summit in Peace and Security.

**Keywords:** AU - EU Security Alliance, Silencing the guns, Africa's Geopolitics, Multilateralism and Defence.

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**Introduction**

The evolving dynamics of violent conflicts in Africa over recent decades necessitate a reassessment and enhancement of the capabilities of conflict management entities to ensure security and political stability for both States and their populations. Peace and security have constituted a fundamental aspect of the cooperation between the African Union (AU) and the European Union (EU) over the past twenty years, and this focus is expected to remain pivotal in the near future. The EU ranks as the AU's second most significant financial partner in matters of peace and security, following the United Nations (UN). In contrast to other issues, such as migration or trade, the overarching goals related to peace and security align closely with shared interests and priorities. Both Addis Ababa and Brussels stand to gain from a unified strategy in addressing armed conflicts and the challenges posed by violent extremism.<sup>1</sup>

The primary focus of this paper is to analyze the strategies employed by the European Union (EU) and the African Union (AU) in addressing conflicts across the African continent, while also highlighting the resolutions established during the 6th EU-AU Summit on Peace and Security. This summit took place in Brussels on February 17-18, 2022, with participation from over 70 diplomats representing both the EU and AU.<sup>2</sup> The discussions underscored the strategic importance of a fortified partnership between the EU and Africa, emphasizing collaboration in economic and geopolitical domains. Furthermore, the summit called for the establishment of a genuine relationship grounded in shared values and interests, which would enable effective responses to the challenges anticipated in the coming decades, such as climate change, migration, and security issues. Particular emphasis was placed on the priorities outlined in the AU's Agenda 2063, as well as the AU's objectives aimed at achieving continental geopolitical stability through the initiative of silencing the guns. In addition to examining the AU-EU Security Alliance that emerged from the summit, this paper also provides an overview of the current political landscape in Africa. The structure of the paper is

organized into several sections: an introduction, the AU-EU Security Alliance, the 6th EU-AU Summit, renewed and enhanced cooperation for Peace and Security, and an analysis of Africa's geopolitical reality.

### **AU - EU Security Alliance**

Peace and security gained relevance in the framework of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) adopted at the Lisbon Summit in December 2007. The JAES was designed to address issues of common concern, and to "jointly promote and sustain a system of effective multilateralism" – mentioning, in particular, the reform of the United Nations (UN) system and of other key international institutions.<sup>3</sup>

Ensuring enduring peace and security in Africa is a mutual interest for both the continent and the European Union (EU). The prioritization of peace and security is essential in the context of the Africa-Europe relationship, as these elements are fundamental prerequisites for sustainable development. The EU stands as one of the African Union's (AU) most crucial partners in matters of peace and security, having contributed over €3 billion (approximately \$3.4 billion) in assistance since 2004. This study argues that to foster a sustainable and revitalized partnership, the EU should enhance its strategic collaboration with the AU in pursuit of the Agenda 2063 initiative, specifically the "Silencing the Guns: Preventing Conflicts, Promoting Peace" agenda, which seeks to eliminate all wars and violent conflicts across the continent. To achieve this objective, the EU should support the AU in adapting and expanding its assistance to African peace initiatives through a more structured and strategic cooperation, particularly in regions characterized by heightened tensions and vulnerabilities.<sup>4</sup>

The European Union ought to assist Africa in fostering resilience by integrating humanitarian, developmental, peace, and security initiatives throughout all phases of conflict and crisis cycles. The interconnections among resilience, peace, security, and governance are profound. Consequently, the EU should collaborate with African stakeholders to bolster

resilience, considering the comprehensive array of challenges that stem from the underlying causes of conflicts to the repercussions of crises. This can be achieved by intensifying EU support for African peace initiatives through a cohesive approach that addresses all stages of conflict and crisis as they emerge. Such an approach involves prevention, resolution, and stabilization efforts through well-targeted humanitarian, development, peace, and security actions, aligned with their respective mandates and added value.<sup>5</sup>

The African continent is characterized by a multitude of violent conflicts that pose significant threats to human, national, and international security. These conflicts hinder the much-needed economic and political integration across the continent. Achieving peace and stability is crucial for advancing Africa's development and fulfilling the objectives outlined in Agenda 2063.<sup>6</sup> The European Union (EU) should support the African Union (AU) in fostering dialogue-oriented approaches to conflict prevention and resolution. Furthermore, the EU ought to assist the AU in cultivating a culture of peace, beginning with educational initiatives at the primary level. Beyond addressing the root causes of conflict, the EU should aid the AU in diminishing military expenditures and ensuring that the state maintains a monopoly on the legitimate use of force. Effective mechanisms for the peaceful resolution of disputes must be established throughout all sectors of society to encourage a culture of peace and tolerance among African populations.<sup>7</sup> While the objective is to achieve peace and security throughout Africa, efforts should be made in priority in regions where tensions are the highest. African states, supported by regional and continental organisations, bear the main responsibility to act, as they are the foremost guarantors of their own security but the EU should markedly step up its support to Africa in cooperation with the international community.<sup>8</sup>

The nature of instability in Africa has evolved, shifting from traditional inter-state conflicts to a more complex landscape characterized by limited state authority over both land and

maritime areas. This instability is further exacerbated by issues such as social fragmentation, domestic extremism, conflicts between communities, the rise of armed factions, terrorism, and transnational criminal activities, which now encompass cybercrime. Additionally, factors such as climate change, food insecurity, heightened competition for natural resources, and various environmental challenges contribute significantly to the region's instability.<sup>9</sup>

Numerous positive outcomes have been realized through the EU-Africa partnership focused on peace and security, particularly as outlined in the EU-AU Memorandum of Understanding on Peace, Security, and Governance. However, the intricate nature of these initiatives, coupled with the worsening conditions in specific areas, necessitates a significant enhancement of our collaborative efforts.<sup>10</sup> It is essential to better align EU instruments with African capacities. A comprehensive review and fortification of our cooperation is imperative, emphasizing a strategic and customized approach grounded in mutual commitments, accountability, and ownership. Although advancements have been made regarding the AU Peace Fund, the financing of African-led peace support initiatives, including those funded through UN-assessed contributions, remains an unresolved issue.<sup>11</sup>

The European Union and Africa must modify their collaborative strategies in fragile regions to effectively influence local governance. The EU's current integrated framework utilizes a comprehensive array of tools, which encompasses high-level political diplomacy, ongoing consultations, mediation efforts aimed at conflict prevention and resolution, imposition of restrictive measures, and collaborative initiatives in counter-terrorism, combating organized crime – including human trafficking – and enhancing maritime security.<sup>12</sup> Through the 'African Peace Facility,' the EU provides support for peace operations led by African nations and the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). On an operational level, missions under the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), along with various security and defense initiatives undertaken by EU

Member States, significantly contribute to maintaining peace and security in regions such as the Sahel, the Horn of Africa, the Gulf of Guinea, the Lake Chad Basin, and the Central African Republic.<sup>13</sup>

#### **6<sup>th</sup> EU - AU summit**

A more robust partnership between the African Union (AU) and the European Union (EU) is anticipated following the conclusion of the sixth EU-AU summit held in February 2022 in Brussels. Recognizing the unprecedented and escalating shared challenges and opportunities, the leaders of both unions have pledged to a Joint Vision aimed at revitalizing their partnership to forge a common future as close allies and neighbors.<sup>14</sup> This initiative represents a collaborative effort between the two unions, with the primary objective of strengthening a renewed partnership focused on solidarity, security, peace, and sustainable economic development for the benefit of their citizens and future generations, thereby fostering connections among their peoples, regions, and organizations.<sup>15</sup>

In response to escalating common security challenges, both organizations have declared a revitalized and strengthened collaboration in the realm of peace and security. The two continents share a historical partnership grounded in the principle of African solutions to African issues, operating within the framework of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). This collaboration is further articulated in the AU-EU Memorandum of Understanding on Peace, Security, and Governance (2018), which aims to address instability, radicalization, violent extremism, and terrorism by tackling the underlying causes of conflicts and managing the entire conflict cycle through a comprehensive approach.<sup>16</sup> They reaffirm their dedication to enhancing cooperation by providing adequate training, capacity building, and resources to bolster and expand the autonomous peace operations of African defense and security forces. This includes support through EU missions and assistance initiatives, as well as efforts to enhance law enforcement capabilities.<sup>17</sup> The European Union will persist in

its support for peacekeeping operations led by African nations, as well as engage in ongoing dialogues regarding the utilization of UN-assessed contributions for missions sanctioned by the UN Security Council. Additionally, the EU will focus on the application of the African Union's human rights compliance framework within this framework. The EU aims to enhance its collaboration on security matters, particularly in the realm of cybersecurity, and will work collectively to advance the rule of law. This includes the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security, Children and Armed Conflict, and Youth, Peace and Security agendas, with a commitment to concrete actions that foster sustainable peace. Furthermore, the EU will continue to uphold and advocate for adherence to human rights and international humanitarian law.<sup>18</sup>

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### **AU-EU Renewed and Enhanced Cooperation for Peace and Security**

In response to the increasing common security challenges, we are pleased to announce a revitalized and strengthened partnership in peace and security. The two continents share a historical collaboration based on the principle of African solutions to African problems, which is embedded within the

African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and articulated in the AU-EU Memorandum of Understanding on Peace, Security, and Governance (2018).<sup>20</sup> This framework aims to address instability, radicalization, violent extremism, and terrorism by tackling the underlying causes of conflicts and managing the entire conflict cycle through a comprehensive approach. The European Union reaffirms its commitment to enhancing this cooperation by providing support for appropriate training, capacity building, and equipment. This initiative seeks to bolster and expand the autonomous peace operations of African defense and security forces, facilitated through EU missions and assistance measures, as well as by enhancing law enforcement capabilities.<sup>21</sup> We will persist in our commitment to support African-led Peace Support Operations, as well as the ongoing dialogues regarding the utilization of UN-assessed contributions for operations sanctioned by the UN Security Council. Additionally, we will focus on the application of the African Union's human rights compliance framework within this framework. Our collaboration on security matters will be strengthened, particularly in the realm of cybersecurity. Both Unions will unite their efforts to advance the rule of law and to implement the agendas related to Women, Peace and Security, Children and Armed Conflict, and Youth, Peace and Security, ensuring that these initiatives are backed by tangible actions aimed at achieving sustainable peace. Furthermore, we will continue to uphold and advocate for adherence to human rights and international humanitarian law.<sup>22</sup>

#### I. *Addressing the Entire Conflict Cycle*

- Key crisis management initiatives include complementary European Peace Facility (EPF) Assistance Measures; support to African-led Peace Support Operations; program such as: IV APSA support program (APF, EUR 40.5 million) and the III AGA support program (APF, EUR 25 million).<sup>23</sup> It will be central to take further the implementation of the AUEU Memorandum of Understanding on Peace, Security and Governance (2018) and enhance the MoU took place in

November 2022. Over EUR 78 million for 12 crisis response actions were spent in 2022, including for instance EUR 10 million to support the Académie Internationale de Lutte contre le Terrorisme's regional counterterrorism response. On maritime security, enhanced implementation of the Coordinated Maritime Presences concept in the Gulf of Guinea and the North Western Indian Ocean is planned.<sup>24</sup>

ii. *Maintaining Peace, Security and Stability, Training, Capacity Building and Equipment*

- Strengthened autonomous peace operations of African defence and security forces, and support for law enforcement capacity building are central. Key initiatives include EUR 40.5 million under the IV APSA support program (APF - 2020-23); EUR 25 million under the III AGA support program (APF - 2021-24); EUR 600 million for the EPF's Assistance Measure General Program for support to the AU (2022-24).<sup>25</sup> Bilateral programs include for instance EUR 109 million EU Mozambique bilateral EPF Assistance Measures; and EUR 27,3 million for EU-Niger bilateral EPF Assistance Measures. The following EU civilian and military missions are currently operational: EUTM-S - Training Mission in Somalia; EUTM RCA - Training Mission in Central African Republic; EUTM Mozambique - Training Mission in Mozambique; EU RACC Sahel; EU Naval Force Operation ATALANTA; EUCAP Somalia - Capacity Building Mission in Somalia; EUCAP Sahel Niger; EUCAP Sahel Mali; EUBAM Border Assistance Mission in Libya; EUAM RCA Advisory Mission in the Central African Republic; IRINI (EUNAVFOR MED) Mission to Monitor Libya's UN arms embargo; EUTM Mali - Training Mission in Mali.<sup>26</sup>

iii. *Supporting African-led operations and human rights compliance*

- Key initiatives include EUR 10 million AU Human Rights Compliance Framework operationalisation; and the Tripartite AU-EU-UN compliance and Accountability Framework (AUCF) project launched in November 2022.<sup>27</sup>

iv. *Cooperating on Security and Cybersecurity*

- The African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC) and the European Union (EU) Political and Security Committee (EUPSC) convened in June 2022 in the new geopolitical context caused by Russia's aggression against Ukraine. Topics discussed included notably the situation in Libya, Somalia, the Sahel, the Lake Chad Basin, and the Great Lakes, ongoing AU Peace Support Operations and ways to enhance their sustainability. Also, ways to increase convergence in multilateral fora and address governance challenges by working on preventive diplomacy were discussed. Further initiatives include the "CyberSouth" project in North African region, or the Tunisia program on border management foreseen for 2023.<sup>28</sup>

v. *Promoting the Rule of Law*

- Key elements include actions under the NDICI-GE thematic program on peace, stability & conflict prevention; support to the development of African election observation capabilities; electoral observation missions; the EU-AU Human Rights Dialogue; the AU Strategic Plan on Protection of children affected by armed conflict (CAAC); the EU Youth Action Plan. The Africa Governance Architecture (AGA) as the platform for dialogue between the various stakeholders who are mandated to promote good governance and strengthen democracy in Africa is supported by the EU through a contribution of EUR 25 million.<sup>29</sup>
- On governance: the EU has launched new Actions supporting the AU Transitional Justice as well as its Election Observation and Assistance work. Building on long-standing cooperation premised on African solutions to African problems, a Senior Officials Meeting under the Memorandum on Peace, Security and Governance was held in the margins of the Commission-to-Commission Meeting in November 2022.<sup>30</sup>

vi. *Complying with human rights and international humanitarian law*

- Cooperation centres around the follow-up of the annual Human Rights Dialogue; actions under NDICI-GE's Thematic Program on Human Rights and Democracy; and EUR 10 million for the Human rights and international humanitarian law compliance, applicable to African-led and mandated peace and security operations.<sup>31</sup>
- Practical cooperation in crisis management and peace support in Africa has continued and indeed increased in some areas, notably with new EU support for Mozambique's fight against terrorism. The EU continues to provide police and military training the Central African Republic and Somalia, and to cooperate in anti-piracy patrols in the North-West Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Guinea. However, coup-born governments in Mali and Burkina Faso expelled French forces that had been helping to combat jihadist armed groups in the Sahel.<sup>32</sup>
- Almost all the funds disbursed from the EU's new European Peace Facility, which replaced the previous African Peace Facility, have gone to buying weapons for Ukraine. The EPF has allocated EUR 3.6 billion for Kyiv out of the total EUR 5.3 billion earmarked in the 2021- 2027 Multilateral Financial Framework. By comparison, it allocated 600mln euros to the AU for peace support operations over three years 2022-2024.
- Some African analysts have expressed concern that the EPF regulation allows for money to be allocated directly to individual states or coalitions, including for the purchase of lethal weapons, rather than working systematically through the AU, which could weaken the AU's authority and fundraising.<sup>33</sup>

vii. *A commitment to multilateralism:* At the Summit, the two continental Unions agreed to work together to promote effective multilateralism within the rules-based international order, with the UN at its core. EU pledge to work towards more converging positions in multilateral fora to reduce global inequalities, strengthen solidarity, promote

international cooperation, fight and mitigate climate change and improve delivery on 'global public goods', in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and AU Agenda 2063. They commit to providing political support to achieve the necessary reform of the WTO and to improve its functioning with a view to strengthening the multilateral trading system. Both sides commit to contribute to the UN system reform efforts, including of the UN Security Council. They also recommit to the full implementation of the Paris Agreement and the outcomes of the COPs. EU recognise that Africa's energy transition is vital for its industrialisation and to bridge the energy gap.<sup>34</sup> EU will support Africa in its transition to foster just and sustainable pathways towards climate neutrality. They recognise the importance of making use of available natural resources within that energy transition process. EU supported Africa's hosting of COP 27 in Egypt in 2022, as well as an ambitious global biodiversity framework. They commit to working together to develop a new ambitious WHO international agreement on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response. Both commit to following up on engagements to monitor the implementation of the commitments undertaken during AU-EU Summits. Follow-up will be done on a regular basis via existing AU-EU structures, including the AU-EU Ministerial Follow-up Committee.<sup>35</sup>

### **Africa's Geo-political Reality**

Africa's role in the contemporary geopolitical landscape presents the African Union (AU) with both significant opportunities and formidable challenges. On one hand, the AU and its member states stand to gain from their longstanding partnership with the European Union (EU), as the shifting geopolitical dynamics allow for the diversification of partnerships aligned with their strategic interests. This diversification provides alternatives that may be more appealing and better suited to their immediate economic and security needs, often with fewer political conditions attached. Additionally, the rapid rise and growing

influence of nations such as China, which are increasingly shaping global economic trends and asserting their presence in major international institutions, expand the range of actors with whom Africa can engage in negotiations for its strategic repositioning within global governance. However, this situation also places Africa in a precarious position, as it finds itself caught in the midst of a struggle for supremacy among major global powers.<sup>36</sup> The European Union, the United States, and various other Western nations have historically served as dependable allies to Africa, dedicating substantial resources to foster the establishment of democratic institutions and promote good governance, which are essential for achieving sustainable peace, security, and development on the continent. In contrast, China and Russia present a different ideological framework, characterized by a more transactional approach to their engagements with African nations. This divergence in partnership styles elucidates the growing influence of China in Africa. China's economic diplomacy, which emphasizes investment in infrastructure and trade without stringent political conditions, is not only more appealing to African governments but also plays a crucial role in advancing sustainable development and long-term economic growth across the continent.<sup>37</sup>

China's economic collaboration with African nations is characterized by the absence of explicit political stipulations. Nevertheless, the substantial loans extended to these countries may be interpreted as a form of debt-trap diplomacy, thereby granting China significant political influence. Furthermore, China's lack of emphasis on political conditionality poses a potential threat to the reinforcement of authoritarian regimes, ultimately prioritizing elite interests over comprehensive economic development that benefits larger segments of the population. This situation is exacerbated by recurrent criticisms directed at China for its apparent neglect of fundamental human rights principles in the pursuit of its economic objectives and the management of its investments in African nations.<sup>38</sup>

Russia's engagement in Africa, while less pronounced than that of China and Western nations, carries significant implications. Several African states, especially those in the Sahel region experiencing political shifts, perceive Russia's military presence and defense diplomacy as a viable strategy to combat the persistent threat of terrorism in the area. However, Russia's backing of the governments in these nations is highly contentious, as it contravenes fundamental African Union principles that prohibit unconstitutional changes in governance, as well as the positions held by both the African Union and ECOWAS regarding these regimes.<sup>39</sup>

The commitment of the Western world to fundamental human rights and democratic principles is often cited as the foundation of its relationships with African nations. This values-driven partnership is generally seen as beneficial for the African populace, garnering considerable support from the general public. However, recent developments in West Africa indicate a waning appeal of this Western ideal among the African populace. The primary factor contributing to this shift is the leadership crisis prevalent in many of these nations, which has resulted in poor governance and democratic shortcomings. Such circumstances lead to disillusionment among citizens, prompting them to reevaluate the merits of democratic governance. Concurrently, there is a growing perception of inconsistency and double standards in the application of international norms by Western partners, fostering skepticism among many Africans towards a values-based framework.<sup>40</sup>

The influence of nations beyond the traditionally recognized powers is increasingly evident, particularly with the rising roles of Turkey and several Middle Eastern countries, including the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Qatar, and Saudi Arabia. These nations are actively shaping the security, political, and socioeconomic landscape of the Horn of Africa, driven by their strategic interests in the region. The UAE, in particular, has adopted a policy focused on economic engagement, securing access to African markets and establishing a significant geostrategic presence through substantial investments in port

infrastructure. This positions the UAE among the leading investors in Africa, alongside China, the United States, and various European countries. Acknowledging the Red Sea's significance as a vital maritime corridor, the UAE has intensified its influence in the area, implementing security measures to safeguard its economic interests and engaging in military collaborations with regional partners, such as Ethiopia. Furthermore, the UAE perceives the Horn of Africa as a crucial zone for addressing security threats arising from the instability in Yemen and piracy in the Gulf of Aden. To mitigate these risks, the UAE has established a military base in Somaliland, a move that inevitably creates tensions with Somalia.<sup>41</sup>

Turkey has emerged as a significant player with growing influence in the Horn of Africa. While Turkey's involvement in the region is not a recent development—having established historical connections and made substantial investments in countries like Somalia—it has gained prominence as a more influential actor in recent years. Key indicators of Turkey's increasing influence in both economic and political domains include its military and defense cooperation agreements with Djibouti and Somalia, the export of drones to Somalia and Ethiopia, an energy investment agreement with Somalia, and its efforts to mediate tensions between Ethiopia and Somalia. These tensions escalated following a January 2024 agreement between Ethiopia and Somaliland, which proposed the potential formal recognition of Somaliland by Ethiopia in exchange for access to the port of Berbera, controlled by Somaliland. For Ethiopia, this agreement was part of a broader strategy to secure alternative maritime access. Conversely, Somalia viewed this development as a breach of its sovereignty, as Somaliland is considered one of its semi-autonomous regions.<sup>42</sup>

Saudi Arabia and Qatar, similar to their regional counterparts, have engaged in significant investments in the Horn of Africa across various sectors, including mining, shipping, agriculture, and manufacturing, among others. Notably, Saudi Arabia has been working with Djibouti to

explore the establishment of a military base at the latter's port. Meanwhile, Qatar has been in competition with the United Arab Emirates for port development projects in Somalia, particularly in its semi-autonomous regions. Additionally, both nations have played a diplomatic role in the Horn of Africa, taking on mediation responsibilities to help resolve conflicts.<sup>43</sup>

The investments made by these countries have yielded development benefits; however, their increasing engagement in the Horn of Africa, coupled with often conflicting interests, has inadvertently exacerbated existing political tensions.<sup>44</sup> For example, the UAE has actively supported the agreement between Ethiopia and Somaliland as part of its strategy to promote its interests in Somaliland, which includes aspirations to transform the region into a trading hub. This involvement has intensified the tensions between Ethiopia and Somalia. Additionally, the rivalry among Middle Eastern nations complicates the longstanding discord between Egypt and Ethiopia regarding the Grand Renaissance Dam on the Nile River. Recent developments, such as the renewed diplomatic relations between Egypt and Turkey and their military collaboration in Somalia, further illustrate this complexity. In the context of their competition for regional influence, both the UAE and Saudi Arabia have played significant roles in exacerbating the conflict in Sudan.<sup>45</sup>

In light of the ongoing competition for Africa and its underutilized resources, it is imperative for the African Union (AU) to develop a comprehensive strategy that will assist its member states in navigating the evolving landscape of global geopolitics. Primarily, this strategy is crucial for reaffirming shared African aspirations and preventing the potential fragmentation and discord within the continent, exemplified by the recent withdrawal of Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the establishment of the Alliance of Sahel States (ASS) among these nations. Such developments underscore the risks associated with forming alliances or aligning with global powers in their quest for supremacy. Furthermore, this strategy should

provide a framework for Africa to effectively harness and exploit the growing interest in its natural resources and strategic geographical position, ultimately benefiting its populace.<sup>46</sup>

### Conclusion

AU-EU Security Alliance within the intense Africa geo-political reality highlights the depth of the shifts in global power balance hence the justification for the African Union to tighten its security alliance especially in pursuing the continental goals of silencing the gun for peace, stability, good governance and development. As a recommendation for the African Union in its alliance with the EU, this paper recommends that the AU should centralise citizens at the core of AU policy and decision-making: in alignment with its core principles and foundational norms, it is crucial to ensure that all decisions and policies of the AU aim to advance the rights, wellbeing and prosperity of the people of the continent.

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