



AFRICA CENTER FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES

Women in African Peace and Security: Where Do Policy and Practice Stand?

BIOGRAPHIES

Panelists (in alphabetical order)

Dr. Yolande Bouka is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Studies at Queen's University. Her research and teaching focus on gender, African politics and security, political violence, and field research ethics in conflict-affected societies. She holds a Ph.D. in International Relations from American University. Her current research is a multi-sited historical and political analysis of female combatants in Southern Africa. Her previous research which is now a book manuscript "In the Shadow of Prison: Power, Identity, and Transitional Justice in Post-Genocide Rwanda" focused on the social and political impacts of the power-laden nature of the Rwandan transitional justice program. Her research has received support from the Fulbright Scholar Program and the American Association of University Women. Prior to joining Queen's University, she was a Visiting Assistant Professor at the Elliott School of International Affairs at the George Washington University, and a Post-Doctoral Fellow at the University of Denver. In addition to her academic work, she has extensive experience with development and security research agencies. She has worked with and offered support to USAID, the UK Department for International Development, the United Nations, the African Union, the Center for Strategic and International Studies and the United States Institute of Peace. Between 2014 and 2016 she was a researcher at the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) in the Conflict Prevention and Risk Analysis Division in Nairobi, Kenya, where she led research on peace and security Africa's Great Lakes Region. She currently serves on the Research Advisory Council the RESOLVE Network, a global consortium of researchers, research organizations, policymakers and practitioners committed to empirically driven, locally defined research on the drivers of violent extremism and sources of community resilience.

Lieutenant General Birame Diop is Chief of Defense Staff of the Senegalese Armed Forces. Prior to this appointment, he served as the National Security Advisor to the President of Senegal. General Diop also served previously as the Chief of Staff and the Deputy Chief of Staff of the Senegalese Air Force. As a pilot in the Senegalese Air Force, he has accumulated a total of 7,000 flying hours. General Diop has studied at the Royal Air Academy of Morocco, the University of Southern California, the Air University of

Alabama, and the College Inter Armées of Paris. General Diop is a scholar and a practitioner who has worked for many years with the Africa Center for Strategic Studies (ACSS), as a facilitator and speaker in a wide range of seminars. He was a fellow at the National Endowment for Democracy and at the Woodrow Wilson Center where he conducted research on Africa's Security Sector Reform. General Diop has published several articles on Strategic Airlift Capacities, Security Sector Reform and Civil Military Relations in Sub-Saharan Africa. He is doctoral student in Diplomacy and International relations at the Center for diplomatic and strategic studies in Dakar/Senegal.

Ambassador Fatima Kyari Mohammed is the Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations. In addition to representational functions her mandate includes developing and maintaining constructive and productive institutional relationships between the African Union and United Nations institutions, supporting and coordinating the activities of the African Group at the United Nations as well as ensuring the effective monitoring, implementation, and promotion of African Union Decisions within the African group in multilateral negotiations.

Prior to her appointment, she was Senior Advisor to the ECOWAS Commission. Her career spans more than two decades with a focus on peace, security, socio-economic development, regional integration, organizational development, and project management in the public and private sectors. She has studied peace, security, development, and conflict transformation (University of Innsbruck), responsible management and sustainable economic development (United Nations University for Peace, Costa Rica) and Business Communication (European University, Switzerland). She also holds a degree in Environmental Design (ABU, Zaria, Nigeria). She is also an ACSS alumna (2005) and an Eisenhower Fellow (2016).

Moderator

Dr. Shannon Smith serves as a professor of practice and director of engagement at the Africa Center for Strategic Studies. In this capacity, she leads the Africa Center's efforts to develop its alumni network and to engage the broader policy community focused on African security issues. Her areas of expertise include U.S.-Africa policy, East Africa, global health and development policy, and the role of Congress in foreign relations.

Prior to joining the Africa Center, Dr. Smith served as deputy assistant secretary of state for Africa, where she oversaw U.S.-East Africa policy (and previously Southern Africa) and spearheaded Africa Bureau efforts on Sudan and South Sudan, global health, and the environment. She led diplomatic missions, developed bilateral and multilateral policies, engaged with key interlocutors, and represented the State Department in a variety of national and international forums, including before Congress.

Dr. Smith spent a number of years on Capitol Hill, where she was the senior policy adviser for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Africa for global health, peacekeeping, and conflict issues. She also served as the national security adviser for the assistant majority leader of the Senate. As a Senate staffer, she shepherded successful legislation on HIV/AIDS, war crimes, and global climate change, among other issues. She is a summa cum laude graduate of Texas A&M University and holds a Ph.D. from Cornell University where she was a Mellon Fellow in the Humanities.