



**AFRICA CENTER
FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES**

Emerging Security Sector Leaders Seminar

SYLLABUS

Online, via Zoom for Government

8 – 30 June 2021



AFRICA CENTER FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES

EMERGING SECURITY SECTOR LEADERS SEMINAR LEADERSHIP IN THE TIME OF UNCERTAINTY

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S Y L L A B U S

TABLE OF CONTENTS

About the Africa Center

Introduction

Map of Africa

Plenary Session 1: Adaptive Leadership: Why It Matters in Times of Uncertainty

Plenary Session 2: Anticipating Unexpected Security Challenges and Crises

Plenary Session 3: Responding to Unexpected Security Challenges and Crises

Plenary Session 4: Leveraging Partnerships in Responding to Unexpected Security Challenges

ABOUT THE AFRICA CENTER

Since its inception in 1999, the Africa Center has served as a forum for research, academic programs, and the exchange of ideas with the aim of enhancing citizen security by strengthening the effectiveness and accountability of African institutions, in support of U.S. - Africa policy.

VISION

Security for all Africans championed by effective institutions accountable to their citizens.

Realizing the vision of an Africa free from organized armed violence guaranteed by African institutions that are committed to protecting African citizens is the driving motivation of the Africa Center. This aim underscores the Center's commitment to contributing to tangible impacts by working with our African partners – military and civilian, governmental and civil society, as well as national and regional. All have valuable roles to play in mitigating the complex drivers of conflict on the continent today. Accountability to citizens is an important element of our vision as it reinforces the point that in order to be effective, security institutions must not just be “strong,” but also be responsive to and protective of the rights of citizens.

MISSION

To advance African security by expanding understanding, providing a trusted platform for dialogue, building enduring partnerships, and catalyzing strategic solutions.

The Africa Center's mission revolves around the generation and dissemination of knowledge through our research, academic programs, strategic communications, and community chapters. Drawing on the practical experiences and lessons learned from security efforts on the continent, we aim to generate relevant insight and analysis that can inform practitioners and policymakers on the pressing security challenges that they face. Recognizing that addressing serious challenges can only come about through candid and thoughtful exchanges, the Center provides face-to-face and virtual platforms where partners can exchange views on priorities and sound practices. These exchanges foster relationships that, in turn, are maintained over time through the Center's community chapters, communities of interest, follow-on programs, and ongoing dialogue between participants and staff. This dialogue—infused with real world experiences and fresh analysis—provides an opportunity for continued learning and catalyzes concrete actions.

MANDATE

The Africa Center is a U.S. Department of Defense institution established and funded by Congress for the study of security issues relating to Africa and serving as a forum for bilateral and multilateral research, communication, exchange of ideas, and training involving military and civilian participants. (10 U.S.C 342)

Introduction

In a dynamic world of fast-evolving security challenges, it is crucial for African leaders to be dynamic and adaptable. Making smart strategic decisions in situations that are volatile, complex, and ambiguous requires insight – the ability to discern nuances – and foresight – knowing what kind of actions or behaviors will likely lead to what result. While managing uncertainty is difficult, strategic leaders not only anticipate uncertainty but also capitalize on and use it as an opportunity for transformational change.¹

The Africa Center for Strategic Studies is organizing this program to assist African security sector leaders (both military and civilian) in developing necessary skills, capabilities and strategies to anticipate and confront the evolving complex security threats in times of uncertainty.

The need for an African leadership that has the competence to comprehend the threats, challenges and opportunities of globalisation, the imperatives of democratisation and good governance, the vision of a preferred future and the capacity and commitment to realise it, is clearly crucial.
(Prof. Ahmed Mohiddin, Africa Leadership, 1998)²

Seminar Structure

This virtual academic seminar nurtures and promotes exchanges on the role of leadership in times of uncertainty and in the face of unanticipated security threats. It is organized into four plenary sessions: (1) Adaptive Leadership: Why It Matters in Times of Uncertainty; (2) Anticipating Unexpected Security Challenges and Crises; (3) Responding to Unexpected Security Challenges and Crises; and (4) Leveraging Partnerships in Responding to Unexpected Security Challenges. A spirit of academic inquiry and debate will guide the program, which will follow the well-tested Africa Center format of plenary sessions followed by discussion group sessions. Knowledgeable speakers will frame the key issues and engage participants in a question-and-answer during the plenary sessions.

Plenary sessions will be followed by breakout discussion groups during which participants will have an opportunity to address the issues raised in the plenary in more detail and to share experiences. Plenary sessions will be 90 minutes each following the Africa Center's standard plenary format of moderated discussion between the faculty lead with leading experts or catalysts (60 min, recorded) and then followed by non-attribution interactive Q&A (30 min; participants' audio enabled and not recorded). Discussion groups will follow the standard, non-attribution format and be 90 minutes in length. The seminar will be conducted in English, French and Portuguese, participants are required to have professional knowledge of one of these languages.

¹ See Patrick Porter, "Taking Uncertainty Seriously: Classical Realism and national Security," European Journal of International Security Vol. 1, Issue 2 (July 2016), 239-260.

² See Ahmed Mohiddin, "Africa Leadership: The Succeeding Generation, Challenges and Opportunities," 1998;

Academic Material

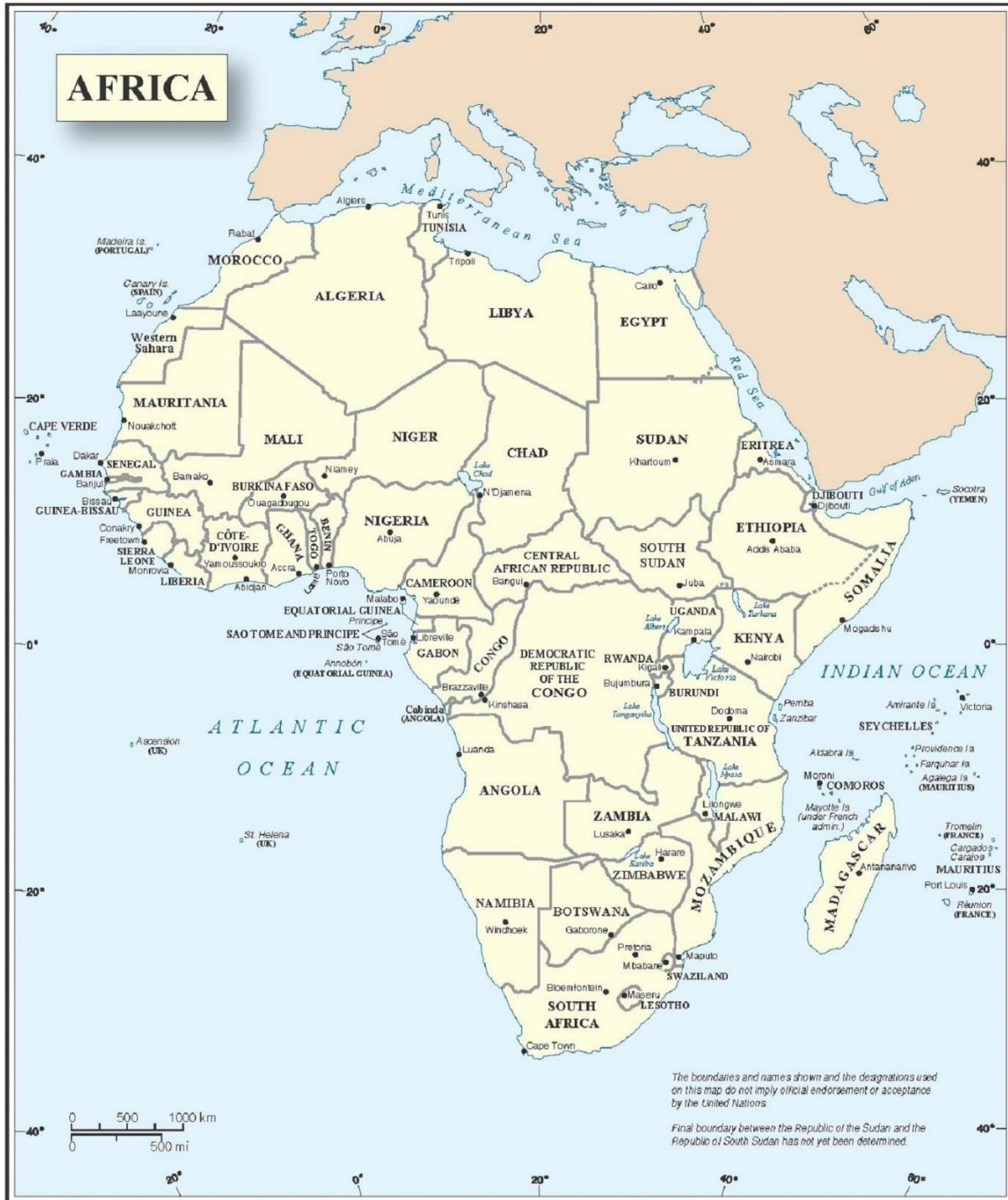
The Africa Center utilizes academic tools to promote frank and open dialogue on critical issues and to lay the foundation for the development of effective peer networking. To facilitate our discussions, we have provided this academic syllabus and recommended readings. We encourage you to consider critically the analyses and content in all the materials provided. In this regard, the readings are intended to foster a healthy dialogue on the security challenges under discussion, which, in turn, will enable you to forge realistic and effective strategies to address these challenges.

As with all Africa Center academic programs, this seminar will be conducted under a strict policy of non-attribution, which is binding during and after the seminar. We encourage you to share the insights you gain from this seminar with your colleagues, but not to quote the specific comments of your fellow participants. We hope that this will allow you to address freely the sensitive issues under discussion. The views expressed in the readings, case studies, and presentations do not represent the official policy or position of the National Defense University, the Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government. All program documentation will be posted on the Africa Center website.

The Syllabus

This syllabus provides an overview of academic material and key policy questions related to adaptation and strategic leadership in Africa's security sector. The document is organized along the lines of the four sessions for this program. For each session, the syllabus gives a brief introduction and frames questions for discussion. To ensure that you and your colleagues may take maximum advantage of the presentations, we have provided selected articles we strongly encourage you to read. The Africa Center realizes that the syllabus covers more issues and materials than can be sufficiently discussed in the available time. We hope that you will use these materials as resources even after the program concludes.

Map of Africa



Map No. 4045 Rev. 7 UNITED NATIONS
November 2011

Department of Field Support
Cartographic Section

Plenary Session 1: Adaptive Leadership: Why It Matters in Times of Uncertainty

Format: Plenary presentation
Discussion groups

Objectives:

- Examine the role of adaptive leadership in volatile and uncertain security environment and crisis.
- Discuss the core attributes that make security sector leaders more effective in responding to uncertain security environment, e.g., anticipation, articulation, adaptation, accountability.
- Share how such attributes of adaptive leadership could be acquired by security sector leaders.

Background:

Ben Ramalingam et al define adaptative leadership as “the ability to anticipate future needs, articulate those needs to build collective support and understanding, adapt your responses based on continuous learning, and demonstrate accountability through transparency in your decision-making process.”³ The concept of adaptive leadership has gained ground since it was first introduced by Harvard Kennedy School Professor Ronald Heifetz in his book, *Leadership Without Easy Answer*.⁴ In the above definition, four key words stand out: *Anticipation* of future trends, crises and options; *articulation* of the importance of “collective understanding” of evolving trends and the need for action; *adaptation* of methods and approaches to incorporate new learning; and *accountability* in terms of “maximum transparency in decision-making,” execution of agreed actions, and evaluation of what has been done. These four words are evident in any kind of successful response to unexpected security threat or crisis. The interaction among these four words generates five key principles that are central to the application of adaptive leadership.⁵

The first principle is the importance of evidence-based learning and adaptation. Organizations that are truly adaptive constantly evaluate their actions and approaches, learning from both their previous failures and successes.⁶ To them, information is essential, and they develop mechanisms for collecting, analyzing, and acting on such information. They set agreed mechanisms and protocols on how changes in information may translate to changes in action. This also means that they have a clear understanding

³ Ben Ramalingam, David Nabarro, Arkebe Oqubay, Dame Ruth Carnall, and Leni Wild, “5 Principles to Guide Adaptive Leadership,” Harvard Business Review, September 11, 2020. <https://hbr.org/2020/09/5-principles-to-guide-adaptive-leadership>

⁴ Heifetz, Ronald A., and Ronald Heifetz. *Leadership without easy answers*. Vol. 465. Harvard University Press, 1994.

⁵ Ben Ramalingam, David Nabarro, Arkebe Oqubay, Dame Ruth Carnall, and Leni Wild, “5 Principles to Guide Adaptive Leadership,” Harvard Business Review, September 11, 2020. <https://hbr.org/2020/09/5-principles-to-guide-adaptive-leadership>

⁶ Heifetz, Ronald A., Marty Linsky, and Alexander Grashow. *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World*. Harvard Business Press, 2009.

of their capabilities, which must be aligned to addressing local problems.⁷ This allows them to continuously think about how evolving challenges match to their existing capabilities, which allows for continuous learning in how they do things. In the context of security sector, this implies more effective gathering, evaluation, and sharing of relevant information, and the incorporation of such information and analysis for developing, implementing, and updating strategies to response to key security challenges.

The second principle is that adaptive organizations stress-test their underlying assumptions and beliefs. They understand that change is the order of the universe and their hypotheses need to be regularly tested through simulation of other possible scenarios. This allows them to identify what is not working in advance of a potential crisis. That way, they make adjustments as they perfect their posture and readiness. The concept of experimentation is essential to this principle since it is often unclear what will work.⁸ This is because complex challenges usually do not have readily available solutions.⁹

The third principle is the need to streamline deliberative decision-making. This means having a structured system or process through which decisions are made and all newly emerging knowledge and analyses can be incorporated. Moreover, this process requires constant review so that decision-making is updated based on a real-time basis that reflects the true nature of events on the ground. Leaders sometimes find it comfortable to keep on repeating what has worked in the past without analyzing the current situation in-depth, which leads to mistakes and missed opportunities.¹⁰

The fourth principle is the significance of accountability, transparency and inclusion. Adaptive leaders and organizations recognize that to err is human. Hence, they prepare themselves to maximize learning from mistakes when they happen. This allows them to quickly identify these mistakes and correct them through a system of self-learning and adjustments. But transparency and accountability do not emerge on their own. They require leaders to incorporate them into how they and their organizations perform.

The final principle is the mobilization of collective action. Unexpected security threats and crises affect societies in multifaceted ways and dealing with them requires the mobilization of the entire society. The recent COVID-19 pandemic started as a health crisis, but it soon morphed into an economic and social crisis. It required leaders not

⁷ Matt Andrews and Salimah Samji, “How to implement policies with impact? A Policymakers’ Toolkit,” Dubai Policy Review, February 2020. <https://dubaipolicyreview.ae/how-to-implement-policies-with-impact-a-policy-makers-toolkit-measurements/>

⁸ Matt Andrews, Lant Pritchett, and Michael Woolcock, “Doing Iterative and Adaptive Work,” Center for International Development Working Paper No. 313, January 2016.

https://bsc.cid.harvard.edu/files/bsc/files/adaptive_work_cd_wp_313.pdf

⁹ Chiemi Hayashi and Amey Soo, “Adaptive Leadership in Times of Crises,” Prism 4, No 1. July 2014.

https://cco.ndu.edu/Portals/96/Documents/prism/prism_4-1/prism78-86_hayashi-soo.pdf

¹⁰ Ronald Heifetz and Marty Linsky, “A Survival Guide for Leaders,” Harvard Business Review, June 2002.

<https://hbr.org/2002/06/a-survival-guide-for-leaders>

simply to mobilize collective action from different parts of their governments, but also from the private sector, academia and the entire population. Such mass mobilization requires effective coordination mechanisms and strong partnerships.

As these five principles demonstrate, adaptive leadership is crucial in building structures and mindset that allow organizations to effectively anticipate and respond to unexpected security crises.¹¹ Leaders must be able to anticipate resistance to their efforts of incorporating adaptive capabilities in how their organization respond to uncertainty. It is important for them to operate “above the fray” and recruit partners who can not only protect them but can also point out flaws in their own strategies. Overall, they must accept their responsibilities and muster the courage to meet them regardless of the difficulties they may face.¹²

Discussion Questions:

- In what ways are the principles of adaptive leadership relevant to African security sector actors and the complex environment in which they operate?
- What are some of the examples where African security sector leaders have incorporated the concept of adaptive leadership in how their organizations and/or governments operate?
- In an environment of state fragility or vulnerability, which faces many African countries, how can the concept of adaptive leadership help in the building effective security organizations?
- Are there acquired skills that make leaders more effective in deploying adaptive leadership style in performance of their responsibilities?

Recommended Readings:

1. Ben Ramalingam, David Nabarro, Arkebe Oqubay, Dame Ruth Carnall, and Leni Wild, “5 Principles to Guide Adaptive Leadership,” Harvard Business Review, September 11, 2020. <https://hbr.org/2020/09/5-principles-to-guide-adaptive-leadership>
2. Ronald Heifetz and Marty Linsky, “A Survival Guide for Leaders,” Harvard Business Review, June 2002. <https://hbr.org/2002/06/a-survival-guide-for-leaders>
3. Matt Andrews, “Is it possible to escape the “public policy futility’ trap?” Harvard Kennedy School,” Building State Capability Blog. <https://buildingstatecapability.com/2018/12/06/implementing-public-policy-is-it-possible-to-escape-the-public-policy-futility-trap/>

¹¹ Ben Ramalingam, David Nabarro, Arkebe Oqubay, Dame Ruth Carnall, and Leni Wild, “5 Principles to Guide Adaptive Leadership,” Harvard Business Review, September 11, 2020. <https://hbr.org/2020/09/5-principles-to-guide-adaptive-leadership>

¹² Ronald Heifetz and Marty Linsky, “A Survival Guide for Leaders,” Harvard Business Review, June 2002. <https://hbr.org/2002/06/a-survival-guide-for-leaders>

Session 2: Anticipating Unexpected Security Challenges and Crises

Format: Plenary presentation
Discussion groups

Objectives:

- Examine how institutions and leaders anticipate trends (e.g., megatrends such as climate change, population growth, technological innovation, migration, urbanization, pandemics etc.) and patterns that may result in dynamic changes to the security landscape.
- Discuss ways in which the development of the National Security Strategy can serve as a tool for anticipating the unexpected threats in the security sector.
- Discuss the need for developing inclusive and centralized foresight capabilities that are guided by a proactive forward-looking approach to anticipate the unexpected crises in security sector.

Background:

The ability to anticipate threats and adequately respond to them when they emerge will become even more important as Africa faces a complex array of challenges affecting the security and well-being of African societies, including state fragility, violent extremism, transnational organized crime, cybersecurity risks, and public health emergencies. Likewise, other structural and socio-economic dynamics such as population growth, inadequate economic performance, technological advances, urbanization and climate change – will amplify existing vulnerabilities the continent faces. How African governments anticipate and respond to these challenges will shape the ways that human security is provided for in Africa in the decades to come. The intersections of these large, transformative dynamics point to the security challenges as well as opportunities inherent in them.

Currently, the COVID-19 pandemic poses an unprecedented challenge to Africa’s public health infrastructure and economic well-being as well as human security. Over the medium to long-term, the combination of a pandemic health crisis with the exponential waves of other megatrends will fundamentally challenge – and potentially fundamentally change - African political, economic, and social systems. Depending on whether African leaders respond proactively or reactively, these interconnected megatrends may lead to virtuous, mutually reinforcing cycles of stability, growth and development or vicious cycles of instability, conflict and poverty.

In this context, the traditional tools and systems of the security sector can be unreliable, or even part of the problem in cases where the security sector is corrupted or politicized.¹³ This place a high burden on the decision-makers to anticipate and identify evolving

¹³ Ouedraogo, Emile. Advancing Military Professionalism in Africa (2016) <https://africacenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ARP06EN-Advancing-Military-Professionalism-in-Africa.pdf>

threats and develop new options for resolving them, particularly since many orthodox security approaches may be ineffective or counter-productive for the newly emerging challenges. These emerging challenges will require new ways of doing things as existing solutions and mechanisms may be insufficient. The ability to anticipate future security threats and adapt responses based on continuous learning are key traits of adaptive leadership.¹⁴ This will require agility and openness to develop and maintain a high-quality, coherent, and forward-looking view often referred to as “foresight capabilities” to anticipate the unexpected crises in security sector.

The emergence of new security challenges also necessitates that African leaders and organizations rethink how they conceive and approach national security. Most African countries do not have an overarching national security strategy with foresight capabilities for anticipating unexpected crises in security sector. This lack of grand strategy inhibits anticipation of future security threats and prioritization and adaptation of responses to these emerging threats. Indeed, it has been shown that a well-designed and inclusive process for formulating national security strategy enables decision-makers to plan better for anticipating and addressing national security threats.¹⁵

A paradigm shift is required for security sector leaders to better deliver security to all citizens through strategic and adaptive leadership, critical thinking, and people-centered security strategies. As it has been clearly manifested by the global outbreak of the coronavirus, responding to Africa’s increasingly complex, interwoven security challenges requires adaptive leadership to create resilient institutions over the long term and decisive, evidence-based decision-making in the face of crisis and uncertainty.

Discussion Questions:

- What major security crises has your country faced recently? Do you think these crises were adequately anticipated and proactively planned for?
- How are security challenges identified, anticipated, and prioritized by your government?
- What kinds of unexpected security threats do you think would be likely to face your country?
- Is there a foresight capabilities system developed to anticipate the unexpected crises in security sector in your country?
- How can a national security strategy help to anticipate and prioritize future security threats in your country?

¹⁴ Ben Ramalingam, David Nabarro, Arkebe Oqubay, Dame Ruth Carnall, and Leni Wild, “5 Principles to Guide Adaptive Leadership,” Harvard Business Review, September 11, 2020. <https://hbr.org/2020/09/5-principles-to-guide-adaptive-leadership>

¹⁵ Mark F. Cancian, “Formulating National Security Strategy: Past Experience and Future Choices,” Center for Strategic and International Studies, October 2017. https://csis-website-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/publication/171006_CSIS_NationalSecurityStrategyFormulation_FINAL_0.pdf

Recommended Readings:

1. EN: Section 1: Key Aspects of National Security Strategy Development," [National Security Strategy Development Toolkit](#), Africa Center for Strategic Studies, January 2021.
FR: "Section 1: Principaux aspects de l'élaboration d'une stratégie de sécurité nationale," [Développement d'une stratégie de sécurité nationale en Afrique, Centre d'Etudes Stratégiques d'Afrique](#), janvier 2021.
PO: "Secção 1: Aspectos chave do desenvolvimento de estratégias de segurança nacional," [Desenvolvimento da estratégias de segurança nacional em Africa](#), janeiro 2021.
2. Jakkie Cilliers, "Violence in Africa: trends, drivers and prospects to 2023," Institute for Security Studies, August 2018, <https://issafrica.s3.amazonaws.com/site/uploads/ar-12-v1.pdf>
3. Raymond Gilpin, "Unpacking the implications of future trends for security in Africa," Brookings, February 3, 2020, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2020/02/03/unpacking-the-implications-of-future-trends-for-security-in-africa/>
4. "Report of the UN Economist Network for the UN 75th Anniversary Shaping the Trends of Our Time," September 2020,
EN: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/publications/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2020/10/20-124-UNEN-75Report-ExecSumm-EN-REVISED.pdf>
FR: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/publications/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2020/10/20-124-UNEN-75Report-ExecSumm-FR-REVISED.pdf>
AR: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/publications/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2020/10/20-124-UNEN-75Report-ExecSumm-AR-REVISED.pdf>
5. Mark Shaw, "Africa's Changing Place in the Global Criminal Economy," ENACT Continental Report 1, September 2017:
EN: <https://enactafrica.org/research/continental-reports/africas-changing-place-in-the-global-criminal-economy>
FR: <https://enactafrica.org/research/continental-reports/levolution-de-la-place-de-lafrique-dans-leconomie-criminelle-mondiale>
6. Sharkdam Wapmuk and Oluwatooni Akinkwotu, "The Dynamics of Africa in World Affairs: From Afro-Pessimism to Afro-Optimism?" *Brazilian Journal of African Studies*, 2, 4 (July-Dec 2017): 11-29;
EN: <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/THE-DYNAMICS-OF-AFRICA-IN-WORLD-AFFAIRS%3A-FROM-TO-Wapmuk-Akinkwotu/01aa12d2d2f1093f5df901bc9f4efc5036536482>

PO:<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/323192720> THE DYNAMICS OF AFRICA IN WORLD AFFAIRS FROM AFRO-PESSIMISM TO AFRO-OPTIMISM

Plenary Session 3: Responding to Unexpected Security Challenges and Crises

Format: Plenary session
Discussion group

Objectives:

- Examine why some leaders succeed in responding effectively to volatile and uncertain security environments.
- Examine challenges and opportunities that adaptive leadership can offer to proactively confront unknown and unexpected security threats.
- Discuss how National Security Strategy development can serve as a practical tool for addressing unexpected threats.
- Share lessons learned from leaders' past responses to unexpected security challenges like terrorist attacks, economic shocks, riots, and popular protests and pandemics.

Background:

Responding to unexpected events often poses a serious challenge to security leaders at strategic, tactical and operational levels. For instance, the public health shock of the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed weaknesses in public security policies and underscored the need to revisit how security is perceived, planned, managed and delivered to the citizens.¹⁶ Responding to unexpected events that challenge governments' ability to deliver public safety and security will require adaptive leadership that is capable not only of anticipating likely future security needs but also to being having a clear framework for quickly re-prioritizing critical public safety and security needs as new, unexpected challenges emerge. There is a cumulative evidence that shows a well-designed and inclusive process of national security strategy development enables the decision-makers in security sector to confront better and in proactive way the security threats and unexpected crises.¹⁷

National security strategies can serve as frameworks to help security sector leaders organize a prompt, carefully considered, and adequately resourced response. Good national security strategies will provide a comprehensive review of threats and challenges to national and citizen security on the basis of inclusive state and society consultations about what security means; it will also designate the roles, responsibilities, and coordination mechanisms of the institutions charged with carrying out the security sector's objectives of protecting the populace and creating conditions for their peaceful

¹⁶ Kuol, Luka, 2020. "COVID-19: A call for people-centered national security strategy in Africa".

<https://blogs.prio.org/2020/11/covid-19-a-call-for-people-centered-national-security-strategy-in-africa/>

¹⁷ Section 1: Key Aspects of National Security Strategy Development," National Security Strategy Development Toolkit, Africa Center for Strategic Studies, January 2021. "Section 1: Principaux aspects de l'élaboration d'une stratégie de sécurité nationale," Développement d'une stratégie de sécurité nationale en Afrique, Centre d'Etudes Stratégiques d'Afrique, janvier 2021. "Secção 1: Aspectos chave do desenvolvimento de estratégias de segurança nacional," Desenvolvimento da estratégias de segurança nacional em Africa, janeiro 2021.

governance and development. Although the process of developing, resourcing, and implementing a national security strategy can take time, the relationships and coordination mechanisms that developing one can foster offer useful resources for leaders to have at their disposal in advance of when any particular crisis might hit. Long-term preparation to respond to unforeseen security challenges might therefore include such frameworks, based on careful considerations of how factors like climate change, migration, urbanization, and the youth bulge are likely to shape different possible African security futures.

Furthermore, beyond the national level, threats and challenges like insurgency, violent extremism, organized crime, global economic shocks, climate change, and pandemics have subnational and transnational implications. Nationally driven responses must therefore also be designed to resonate with a wide variety of citizens and feed into regional and continent-wide mechanisms and arrangements for response. Multiple principles and tools can facilitate this. One is good security governance rooted in civilian democratic control and oversight of the security sector. Trust between citizens and the security sector actors is more likely to grow when security sector leaders demonstrate their support for public oversight and accountability and exhibit a steadfast commitment to interact with residents and citizens on the basis of respect for human rights and the rule of law.

A second example is fostering formal and informal coordination and communication mechanisms to address widespread security challenges. Strengthening national-level, inter-ministerial coordination efforts to counter key security challenges, or to take preventative actions in anticipation of them, are critical. Linking those initiatives up to cross-border coordination mechanisms on the bilateral, regional, and continental levels can also help to build collective resilience to issues like terrorism, cybercrime, natural resource crimes, human trafficking, conflict, climate-related challenges, and public health emergencies.

Discussion Questions:

- Can you share your experience of an unexpected security crisis that recently faced your country? How it was responded to and what was the role of government leaders?
- What do you think could have been done differently in responding to and addressing this unexpected security crisis?
- What elements of adaptive leadership can you identify in the response, or do you think could have helped to better respond to this challenge?
- How might having a national security strategy give leaders an advantage in dealing effectively with unforeseen security challenges?

Recommended Readings:

1. EN: "Section 1: Key Aspects of National Security Strategy Development," [National Security Strategy Development Toolkit](#), Africa Center for Strategic Studies, January 2021.
FR: "Section 1: Principaux aspects de l'élaboration d'une stratégie de sécurité nationale," [Développement d'une stratégie de sécurité nationale en Afrique, Centre d'Etudes Stratégiques d'Afrique](#), janvier 2021.
PO: "Secção 1: Aspectos chave do desenvolvimento de estratégias de segurança nacional," [Desenvolvimento da estratégias de segurança nacional em Africa](#), janeiro 2021.
2. EN: NSSD Case Studies: [Senegal](#), [Burkina Faso](#), and [Nigeria](#)
FR: Etudes de cas du DSSN : [le Sénégal](#), [le Burkina Faso](#), et [le Nigeria](#)
PO: Estudos de casos DESN: [Senegal](#), [Burkina Faso](#), y [Nigéria](#)
3. EN: "[Understanding Democratic Control and Oversight of the Security Sector](#)," in *Tool 6: Civil Society Involvement in Security Sector Reform and Governance*, DCAF, 2015, pp. 15-20.
FR: "[Comprendre le contrôle démocratique du secteur de la sécurité](#)," dans Outil 6: Le rôle de la société civile dans la réforme et la gouvernance du secteur de la sécurité, Centre de Contrôle démocratique des forces armées, 2015, pp. 23-30.
PO: "[Entendimento do controlo democrático do sector de segurança](#)"
Envolvimento da Sociedade Civil na Governação e Reforma do Sector de Segurança, Centro de Genebra para o Controlo Democrático das Forças Armadas, 2015, pp. 17-22.

Plenary Session 4: Leveraging Partnerships in Responding to Unexpected Security Challenges

Format: Plenary session
Discussion group

Objectives:

- Examine the importance of partnership and collective action in mobilizing and coordinating responses to unexpected security challenges and crises.
- Share lessons learned from Ebola and COVID-19, as well as more traditional security challenges such as the exponential rise of violent extremism, transnational organized crime and climate change, for leaders to leverage partnership and improve coordination in response to unexpected security threats and crisis.
- Discuss why some countries and regions have been more successful than others in leveraging partnerships and external assistance to mitigate these complex challenges.

Background:

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the crucial role external partnerships play in addressing the African continent's most critical challenges. To immunize its citizens and cope with the pandemic's public health effects, African countries are reliant on vaccines supplied by foreign companies. To fully recover from a pandemic-induced recession and prevent significant increases in poverty, African economies will require its external partners to provide an estimated \$154 billion in financing and debt relief.¹⁸ In other key challenges, such as the fight against rising violent extremism, transnational organized crime, or the effects of climate change, external actors provide human resources, equipment, advice, financing, technology, and training to African states.

While reliance on external support may sometimes be necessary to meet the magnitude of the challenges, African states, and particularly African leaders, have the primary responsibility and agency to shape outcomes across the continent. Despite very real material disparities, African actors have long leveraged outside assistance, foreign competition, and contextual knowledge to pursue local political goals and objectives. If anything, the 21st century, which has been characterized by steady growth, rapidly diffusing technology, and increasing global interest in Africa, has provided African policymakers with more autonomy than ever.¹⁹

The power of African states to mobilize and coordinate collective action is evident in the continent's actions to address the COVID-19 pandemic. A youthful population, expert-guided responses informed by previous experience in fighting Ebola, the adoption of a

¹⁸ African Development Bank, African Economic Outlook: 2021, African Development Bank Group, 2021,

<https://www.afdb.org/en/knowledge/publications/african-economic-outlook>

¹⁹ Folashadé Soulé, "'Africa+1' summit diplomacy and the 'new scramble' narrative: Recentering African agency', African Affairs Vol. 119, No. 477 (2020), pp. 633-646.

continental strategy, and innovative uses of emerging technology helped many African countries weather the pandemic's early stages better than initially feared.²⁰ Some countries, such as Rwanda, with its digitally-boosted prevention and contact tracing strategy, and Senegal, which is producing a \$1 testing kit, have achieved broad recognition.²¹ Others, particularly countries with large urban areas and significant international exposure, have proven more vulnerable. For countries that lack transparency or are not collecting sufficient data through testing, it is difficult to get a sense of COVID-19's true impact.²²

The COVID-19 pandemic and its aftershocks offer African leaders the opportunity to pursue a people-centered, whole of society strategy to leverage partnerships and align external assistance to their national strategic goals.²³ African leaders who are clear on their national priorities can engage with external partners as equals, even while receiving advice, assistance, and long-term support needed to recover from the pandemic.

Ultimately, the burden rests on African actors to make strategically informed decisions that leverage outside assistance to build a more stable, prosperous future. The variation in the quality of responses to the unexpected crises such as Ebola and COVID-19 can largely be attributed to governance and leadership. Leaders with the ability to anticipate future unexpected security crises, to articulate a coherent and proactive national strategy to confront such crises, and who commit to building accountable institutions and transparent decision-making processes are likely to be most successful in leveraging partnerships to achieve their strategic goals and foster more stable, prosperous societies.²⁴

Discussion Questions:

- Can you share the experience of an unexpected security crisis faced by your country; what was the role of external actors (African and non-African actors) in supporting the national response to this crisis? How important was the role of external actors and why?
- Can you identify an example of an externally sponsored security engagement or exercise that did not align with your country's needs at that time? What was the result? How might that opportunity for partnership have been better used to meet

²⁰ Sheri Fink, "As Virus Resurges in Africa, Doctors Fear the Worst Is Yet to Come" New York Times, 26 December 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/26/world/africa/africa-coronavirus-pandemic.html>; World Health Organization, "COVID-19 Spurs Health Innovation in Africa," 29 October, 2020, <https://www.afro.who.int/news/covid-19-spurs-health-innovation-africa>.

²¹ Youssef Travaly, Aretha Mare and Esther Kunda, "Learning from the Best: Evaluating COVID-19 Responses and What Africa Can Learn," Next Einstein Forum Opinion Paper, 9 June 2020, <https://nef.org/learning-from-the-best-evaluating-covid-19-responses-and-what-africa-can-learn/>.

²² Africa Center for Strategic Studies, "Analyzing Africa's Second Wave of COVID-19," 5 January 2021, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/africa-varied-covid-landscapes/> <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/analyzing-africas-second-wave-of-covid-19/>.

²³ Luka Kuol, 2020. "COVID-19: A call for people-centered national security strategy in Africa". <https://blogs.prio.org/2020/11/covid-19-a-call-for-people-centered-national-security-strategy-in-africa/>.

²⁴ Ben Ramalingam, David Nabarro, Arkebe Oqubay, Dame Ruth Carnall, and Leni Wild, "5 Principles to Guide Adaptive Leadership," Harvard Business Review, September 11, 2020. <https://hbr.org/2020/09/5-principles-to-guide-adaptive-leadership>

national priorities? How can African countries make the best out of their partnerships with external actors to respond to unanticipated security challenges? How can adaptive leaders leverage partnership, mobilize and align external support to national strategic security interests and vision?

Recommended Readings:

1. EN: The [NSSD Toolkit](#): Phase 7, Pages: 40-42.
FR: La [boîte à outils de l'élaboration de la stratégie de sécurité nationale](#) : Phase 7, pages : (44 à 49).
PO: O [NSSD Toolkit](#): Fase 7, Páginas: 43-47.
2. Ben Ramalingam, David Nabarro, Arkebe Oqubay, Dame Ruth Carnall, and Leni Wild, "5 Principles to Guide Adaptive Leadership," Harvard Business Review, September 11, 2020.
<https://hbr.org/2020/09/5-principles-to-guide-adaptive-leadership>
3. Africa Center for Strategic Studies, "Africa's Varied COVID Landscapes," 13 July 2020,
EN:<https://africacenter.org/spotlight/africa-varied-covid-landscapes/>
FR : <https://africacenter.org/fr/spotlight/les-paysages-varies-de-la-covid-en-afrique/>
PO:<https://africacenter.org/pt-pt/spotlight/diversos-panoramas-covid-19-africa/>
4. Africa Center for Strategic Studies, "Analyzing Africa's Second Wave of COVID-19," 5 January 2021.
EN:<https://africacenter.org/spotlight/analyzing-africas-second-wave-of-covid-19/>
FR:<https://africacenter.org/fr/spotlight/analyse-de-la-seconde-vague-de-covid-19-en-afrique/>
5. African Union and Africa Center for Disease Control, "African Joint Continental Strategy for COVID-19 Outbreak," 5 March 2020.
https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/38264-doc-africa_joint_continental_strategy_for_covid-19_outbreak.pdf
6. Bernard Harborne, W. Dorotinsky, & Paul Bisca, (Eds.). (2017). "Securing Development: Public Finance and the Security Sector. World Bank Publications," Pages: 1-12.
EN:<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/25138/210766ov.pdf?sequence=6&isAllowed=y>
FR:<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/25138/210766ovFR.pdf?sequence=4&isAllowed=y>
PO:<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/25138/210766ov.pdf?sequence=6&isAllowed=y>