



AFRICA CENTER FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES

AFRICA'S CONTEMPORARY SECURITY CHALLENGES

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Washington, D.C.

SYLLABUS

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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

This seminar will provide you with enhanced knowledge of the complexities of Africa's security landscape in order to contextualize and enhance the work of U.S. professionals on policy and programs related to Africa. This seminar will: 1) discuss the contemporary security challenges facing African states, 2) provide insight to the megatrends and drivers of conflict in Africa, showing their interrelated nature and security implications, 3) highlight the key responses to these challenges undertaken by Africans and their partners, and 4) discuss ways in which the United States can work with African partner states to advance their mutual security interests. You will be challenged to critically assess strategic responses to Africa's security challenges and identify ways to apply the concepts and lessons from the seminar.

The seminar is divided into three modules. The first, entitled Africa's Security Landscape, will explore key themes in continental security. The first two plenaries will focus on trends in political violence and violent extremism in Africa, as well as the security implications of other megatrends on the continent. The remaining modules cover three types of security challenges that are relevant for painting a comprehensive picture of Africa's security landscape: transnational organized crime, maritime security, and cyber security. Sessions will address the main drivers of insecurity in these areas as well as explore existing and possible future U.S. responses to these threats.

The second module assesses trends in African security sector governance and the politics that shapes the security sector's transparency, accountability, and legitimacy among citizens. Plenaries will showcase recent trends in democratization and governance on the continent and discuss the role of external actors in African security. The module concludes with a case study panel and simulation exercise about civil-military relations in the Republic of Sudan.

The third module sheds light on local, regional, and international actors' responses to current opportunities and challenges in African security. Plenaries will examine processes relating to national security strategy and security resource management, analyze the responses of African governments and regional political actors to notable security trends, and present key elements of U.S. government partnership and assistance to Africa. Integrated into the second and third modules of the program will be a simulation exercise designed to help participations think through how to practically respond to one of Africa's most significant security challenges posed by the October 2021 coup that derailed Sudan's transition from military to civilian rule.

The seminar will succeed only with honest analysis and productive dialogue. To this end, the Africa Center seeks to provide empirical evidence to facilitate frank and open exchange on critical issues, as well as to lay the foundation for effective peer networking. To facilitate your learning, we provide an academic syllabus and recommended readings. We encourage you to challenge the analyses and content in all the material provided. Unless noted, the readings do not reflect official U.S. Government policy. They are intended to foster a healthy dialogue on a wide range of African security challenges, which in turn will help you forge realistic and effective strategies to address insecurity in Africa. As with all Africa Center programs, this seminar will be conducted under a strict policy of non-attribution, which is binding during and after the seminar. We hope that this will allow for candid the sensitive issues under discussion.

Map of Africa



Map No. 4045 Rev. 8.1 UNITED NATIONS
July 2018

Department of Field Support
Geospatial Information Section (formerly Cartographic Section)

Overview of ACSS

Objective

- To provide an overview of the Africa Center's mission and programs

Background

The Africa Center for Strategic Studies advances U.S.-Africa policy through its vision of strengthening African states' strategic capacity and institutions to identify and resolve security challenges in ways that promote people-centered security, strengthen civil-military cooperation, respect democratic values, and safeguard human rights. The Africa Center advances its vision through its mission of engaging African partner states and institutions in rigorous academic and outreach programs that build strategic capacity and foster long-term, collaborative relationships.

Since its inception in 1999, the Africa Center has provided executive-level academic programs for Africa's security-related professionals to identify and evaluate current and emerging security threats, agree on strategies and shared responsibilities for national and regional security, and reinforce internationally-recognized best practices in their various spheres of activity. The Africa Center's Community Chapter program promotes peer networking among former participants, affording them an opportunity to continue dialoguing and collaborating on key security issues upon returning to their home countries. Publications from the Africa Center's research program are frequently written by African researchers to expand analysis and understanding of Africa's security challenges.

The Africa Center achieves its objectives by adhering to five core values in its programs and research: an academic approach, partnership, consultation, academic freedom, and non-attribution. The Africa Center employs both an academic approach and outreach strategies in all of its activities and uses academic tools to produce practical results. This is based on the belief that security challenges can be resolved only by asking difficult questions and searching sincerely and creatively for the solutions. Further, the Africa Center believes that the formulation of solutions to security challenges must include African security leaders, citizens, and subject-matter experts; thus, the Africa Center works with practitioners, academics, military officials, and civilians as facilitators/speakers for its programs. In the same vein, the Africa Center holds several consultative sessions prior to each program, and these are designed to ensure that the programs are relevant to both African and American security interests. In order to facilitate an honest and frank discussion of the security challenges and needs facing Africa, the Africa Center strictly adheres to a non-attribution policy in all of activities.

Required Reading:

Website: www.africacenter.org

Module 1: Africa's Security Landscape

This module will explore Africa's security landscape, looking at current issues and long-term security trends and challenges across the continent. The first plenary will focus on trends in conflict and political violence in Africa, as well as the security implications of other megatrends on the continent. The second plenary discusses the rise of violent extremism across Africa along with the state responses required to address the community grievances that so often contribute to radicalization. The remaining modules cover three thematic areas of security that are relevant for grasping the full range of security challenges in Africa and that are related to, but also go beyond, issues of conflict and political violence: transnational organized crime, maritime security, and cyber security. These modules will also address the role that U.S. diplomatic and security actors can play in supporting African partners to confront these challenges.

Plenary 1: Violent Conflict Trends, Megatrends, and Security Implications

Objectives:

- Explore the changing demographic, economic, and environmental factors that may pose security challenges now or in the near future.
- Understand the types of conflict and violence in Africa, as well as changes in patterns of conflict and violence over time.
- Consider how the United States can support African governments, regional organizations, and citizens to address the security implications of these megatrends and mitigate the drivers of conflict.

Background:

There are several factors that will shape Africa's peace and security and its trajectory of change in the near and long term. These "megatrends" include a web of complex and reinforcing dynamics such as demographic and social change, urbanization, climate change, and migration. These megatrends will create negative and positive shocks that both exacerbate security challenges and create new opportunities for the continent. These megatrends are accompanied by the underlying current of a rising governance deficit in Africa, in which states themselves are a source of insecurity.¹ The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic exposed weaknesses in the capacities of states, systems of government, and public policies to weather crisis and it underscored the critical role of institutions and strategic leadership in confronting these shocks.²

By 2035, Africa is projected to double its population to nearly 2 billion people; such rapid growth will mean that 50 percent of the population will be under 21.³ This rapidly growing youth population will provide a huge working-age labor force necessary for economic growth, but could also exacerbate security challenges if youth unemployment remains high.⁴ Increasing urbanization will provide opportunities for development but could also increase urban poverty and crime.⁵ The movement of people within and across national boundaries will also continue to pose a host of political, economic, and societal challenges that influence the provision of human security.⁶ Meanwhile, the climate crisis has the potential to affect each of the above tendencies; increasing temperatures and greenhouse gas emissions will increasingly cause natural disasters, limit already scarce resources, and reduce economic opportunities – all of which have the potential to induce conflict.⁷

Also, these megatrends will increasingly exacerbate the prevalence and intensity of violent conflicts on the continent. There is a decline in interstate conflicts and an increase in intrastate conflicts including civil wars.⁸ Specifically, intrastate conflicts remain the major source of insecurity with Africa having the largest number of rising one-sided violence in relation to other regions. With reference to one-sided violence, terrorist attacks have surged considerably in Africa, and have become not only one of the main drivers of instability but also Africa's greatest security threat.⁹ There is also a rapid increase in state-based violence, and one-sided violence with non-state violence declined but remained a significant concern.¹⁰ Beyond violent conflict, protests and riots in Africa have drastically increased since 2001, which is largely attributed to substantial increase in awareness, access to internet and social media.¹¹

There are multiple causes of political violence and conflict.¹² Some important triggers of violence are poor governance, social exclusion, and weak rule of law. Some of the core drivers of violent

extremism in Africa are state-perpetrated human rights abuses and citizens' perceptions of unjust treatment by the state¹³. Similarly, exclusion from access to power, opportunity, services, and security creates fertile ground for mobilizing group grievances into violence.¹⁴ Government corruption and popular demand for accountability have also triggered recent protests in many African countries.¹⁵ Africa's future could continue to show increased conflict if changes do not occur in rule of law, the public management of resources, and the inclusion of youth, women, and marginalized groups in governance and politics.¹⁶

Discussion Questions:

- What are some of the most pressing security challenges facing the continent, and what opportunities do some of the continent's megatrends create for U.S. partnership in Africa?
- Has U.S. policy reflected the changing security landscape in Africa? If so, has this succeeded in reducing insecurity? If not, how can it adapt?
- How can the international community and U.S. in particular assist African governments and institutions to improve governance and build foresight capabilities for monitoring and anticipating the changes in security landscape for better and proactive responses to the security challenges?

Required Readings:

Raymond Gilpin, "Unpacking the implications of future trends for security in Africa."

Brookings, 2020, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2020/02/03/unpacking-the-implications-of-future-trends-for-security-in-africa/>

Luka Kuol, "COVID-19: A call for people-centered national security strategy in Africa." Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), 2020. <https://blogs.prio.org/2020/11/covid-19-a-call-for-people-centered-national-security-strategy-in-africa/>

Julia Bello-Schünemann et al. *African Futures: Key Trends to 2035*. Institute for Security Studies, 2017. <https://issafrica.s3.amazonaws.com/site/uploads/policybrief105.pdf>

United Nations; World Bank. 2018. "Executive Summary: *Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict*." Washington, DC: World Bank, 2018, <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/28337>

Plenary 2: Violent Extremism

Objectives:

- Assess the trends, prevalence and intensity and the underlying drivers and root causes of violent extremism (VE) in Africa, with an emphasis on the Sahel as a case study.
- Distill the roles played by national, local government and non-government actors, as well as the international and regional communities, in countering and preventing VE.
- Discuss how the United States can support local, national, regional, and international efforts to address VE in the Sahel and elsewhere in Africa.

Background:

Africa has been experiencing a steady increase of violent extremism over the past decade. This escalation has been characterized in recent years by an upsurge of violence targeting civilians. In 2021, a quarter of all violent extremist attacks were on civilians. This compares to 14 percent in 2016. The frequency of attacks against civilians has varied in Africa's major theatres of violent extremism – the Sahel, Somalia, the Lake Chad Basin, northern Mozambique, and North Africa – underscoring the distinct drivers and strategies of these groups. In each context, the character of violence is a dynamic process that evolves with changes in the conflict environment. As contexts evolve, the levels, types, and choice of targets of violence evolve as well. In other words, the strategies of violent extremist organizations (VEOs) adapt to and align with the political, social, and strategic imperatives of the conflict environments in which VE actors operate.

The Sahel:

The Sahel has experienced the highest level of extremist violence targeting civilians across the continent, comprising 60 percent of all such violence against civilians in Africa. The region has changed dramatically since the armed insurgencies that emerged in northern Mali in 2012 after the death of Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi. The magnitude and reach of deterioration in security that has followed is worse than anything experienced by the region in recent times. The proliferation of VEOs, unaccountable community based armed groups, and criminal gangs has wreaked havoc on rural populations. As conflicts have become more multi-faceted, and serious human rights violations, including by security services, have become more pervasive, civilian deaths have risen. A near doubling in violence linked to VEOs in the Sahel in 2021 highlights the rapidly escalating security threat to the entire region. This spike was the most significant change in any of the theaters of violent extremism in Africa.

Rising communal tensions around land and natural resources, often triggered by socio-economic changes and environmental degradations as well as a crisis of state legitimacy, have created conditions that are conducive to the emergence and proliferation of armed groups. Jama'at Nusrat al Islam wal Muslimin (JNIM), a coalition of violent extremist groups, and Islamic State in the Greater Sahara, have shrewdly exploited inter- and intra-communal rivalries over resources and rights as well as rising frustrations with governments to expand their influence.

Because each context is different, course correction must be attuned to local specificities and demands. Given the instrumentalized use of violence against civilians by VEOs, however, a reassessment and retargeting of responses is needed. Key among these is prioritizing efforts to prevent VE groups from exploiting existing communal tensions. The security environments in

the Sahel could benefit from enhanced government and civil society efforts to ease ethnic tensions by facilitating ongoing intercommunal dialogues, strengthening dispute resolution mechanisms, and establishing more transparent and equitable land use and property rights rules.

Greater emphasis is also needed on training and deploying professional security forces. Avoiding heavy-handed responses that alienate aggrieved communities can mitigate violent extremist recruitment. The deployment of disciplined, professional forces can also protect citizens in contested areas, creating a buffer between antagonized groups. Reforms that address the drivers of radicalization are needed, as is regional cooperation. To the latter end, Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger have all contributed troops to the Joint force of the G5 Sahel, an intergovernmental organization founded in 2014, and held its first two joint military operations in 2017 and 2018, but from which Mali withdrew in 2022. While the G5 Sahel was originally created to promote regional development and reduce insecurity, it is currently seeking to address its changed realities with Mali's withdrawal and to the extent that it continues to function effectively, remains invested in securing borders affected by militant Islamist activities.

Discussion Questions:

- What concrete and practical measures can African nations take, working at the national, regional, and international levels, to better counter VEOs on the continent?
- What kinds of drivers of violent extremism could security assistance, as well as development and governance work by U.S. partners, help to address on the local level in Sahelian communities or communities in other theaters of VEO activity?
- How can the counter VEO focus of the 2022 U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa be successfully implemented?

Required Readings:

Anouar Boukhars, "Trajectories of Violence Against Civilians by Africa's Militant Islamist Groups." Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 2022, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/trajectories-of-violence-against-civilians-by-africas-militant-islamist-groups/>

Daniel Eizenga and Wendy Williams, "The Puzzle of JNIM and Militant Islamist Groups in the Sahel," Africa Security Brief No. 38, December 2020, <https://africacenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/ASB-38-EN.pdf>

Michael Shurkin, "Strengthening Sahelian Counterinsurgency Strategy," Africa Security Brief, No.40, July 2022, <https://africacenter.org/publication/strengthening-sahelian-counterinsurgency-strategy/>

Kamissa Camara, "It Is Time to Rethink U.S. Strategy in the Sahel," United States Institute of Peace, April 15, 2021, <https://www.usip.org/publications/2021/04/it-time-rethink-us-strategy-sahel>

Plenary Session 3: Transnational Organized Crime

Objectives:

- Describe prevalence, trends, and the key actors, and networks involved in transnational organized crime (TOC) in Africa.
- Understand the drivers of TOC in Africa, as well as its consequences for governance, stability, and economic development.
- Discuss how the United States can engage Africans in national governments, regional organizations, and on the grassroots level to address transnational organized crime.

Background:

TOC is a growing security challenge in Africa, and one that is frequently linked to violent extremism because of the overlapping of criminal networks and violent extremist organizations in geographic areas like northern Mali, the Liptako-Gourma Region, Lake Chad Basin, and Horn of Africa. The different ways that the “crime-terror nexus” manifests itself in Africa has direct implications for the U.S. Strategy for Africa’s emphasis on countering VEOs. Addressing the security, development, and governance factors that enable TOC to take root in particular African states and societies also fits into the Strategy. After all, Africa is home to the world’s second largest rainforest in the Congo Basin and produces over 30% of the world’s “critical minerals.” Both of these types of natural resources are exploited when convenient by organized criminal actors and have adverse effects not only on national security (through conflict and insurgency) but also on human security (through the availability of sustainable, legal livelihoods).

To address these issues, it is necessary to understand there are many forms of TOC in Africa, which are perpetrated by a range of state and non-state actors. Human trafficking, arms trafficking, and non-renewable resource crimes are the three most widespread criminal markets across the continent, and overall, the COVID-19 pandemic increased the ability of those state-embedded actors who facilitate TOC to do so with loosened measures for accountable governance in place.¹⁷ TOC and political instability are mutually reinforcing, with the commercial, criminal, and corrupt elements of TOC fostering political economies that undermine development.¹⁸

There is no single definition of organized crime, but the UN’s Palermo Convention – which most African countries have ratified – defines “organized criminal groups” as three or more people, existing for a period of time, that act together with the aim of committing at least one crime punishable by four years’ incarceration in order to obtain a financial/material benefit.¹⁹ Organized crime is transnational when activities and their effects cross national borders. Devising responses can be challenging, as some states are ill-equipped to counter and prevent criminal network activities or have certain high-level officials who are politically unwilling to combat crimes from which they benefit. The coordination of security, justice, and other institutions on the inter-agency, cross-border, and subnational levels is warranted, but inherently complex.

Security sector actors in African states are well aware of the challenges of countering TOC, but also face the difficult task of devising responses that fit local contexts. Political economy frameworks can help emerging leaders understand where to start. Taking a political economy approach involves understanding who the different actors are, identifying the strategies they may adopt based on African states’ criminal markets and vulnerabilities, and assessing how resilience factors can change organized criminal actors’ incentives to pursue TOC in particular places.

One example of a political economy framework is the ENACT Consortium’s Organized Crime Index ([released in 2019](#) and [updated for 2021](#)).²⁰ The Index examines four primary criminal actors: state-embedded actors, criminal networks, foreign actors, and mafia-style actors. Beyond tracking the presence and intensity of ten different criminal markets in all African countries, the Index analyzes twelve factors affecting resilience to TOC: political leadership and governance, government transparency and accountability, international cooperation, national policies and laws, judicial capacity, law enforcement capacity, anti-money laundering, economic regulatory capacity, victim and witness support, prevention, non-state actor involvement in response, and territorial integrity.²¹ Ultimately, the most successful efforts to counter TOC are likely to involve security responses that feed into broader efforts to address the development- and governance-related drivers of organized crime.

Discussion Questions:

- What can the U.S. do to help African states and African civil society to address TOC? In what ways might security assistance be useful, and in what ways might governance and development response be useful?
- The 2022 U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa endorses “combating wildlife trafficking” and “assist[ing] African countries to more transparently leverage their natural resources” like rainforests and mineral resources to foster development and improve transparency in supply chains. How can U.S. defense and security actors engage African counterparts on these issues?
- Are there any specific policy or strategy measures that U.S. Government officials are pursuing or might consider pursuing to counter TOC as part of its efforts to counter terrorist and VEO financing?

Required Readings:

Mark Shaw, “Africa’s Changing Place in the Global Criminal Economy.” ENACT Continental Report 1, 2017,

<https://enact-africa.s3.amazonaws.com/site/uploads/2017-09-26-enact-continental-report1.pdf>

C. Browne, Catherine Lena Kelly, and Carl Pilgram, “Illegal Logging and its Security Implications,” Africa Center for Strategic Studies, August 12, 2022,

<https://africacenter.org/spotlight/illegal-logging-in-africa-and-its-security-implications/>

Africa Center for Strategic Studies, “Executive Summary: Enhancing Security-Justice Coordination to Counter Transnational Organized Crime,” 2021,

<https://africacenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/CTOC-SJ-Executive-Summary-EN.pdf>

Plenary 4: Maritime Security

Objectives:

- Explore the security, development, and governance dynamics of maritime safety and security in Africa.
- Evaluate existing regional, national, and local-level arrangements to safeguard Africa's maritime interests.
- Discuss how the United States can further advance maritime safety and security in Africa.

Background:

The African maritime industry or “blue economy,” in terms of fisheries, minerals, hydrocarbons, tourism, and trade from thirty- eight costal countries and six islands, is estimated to be worth US\$ 1 trillion per year.²² Besides such economic potential, over 90 percent of African exports and imports are transported by water.²³ While there is much potential, there is a tendency towards “sea blindness” and to ignore the maritime domain and its centrality to African economic growth as well as its security and defense. The maritime space has been a theater of criminal activities and is host to a web of security threats, from Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (IUU), drug trafficking, natural resource theft, piracy, and armed robbery at sea.²⁴ The COVID-19 pandemic has also exacerbated maritime security threats by disrupting supply chains and increasing the risk of ports becoming targets for attack.

The protection of Africa's maritime space and resources is a strategic security concern of both costal countries and landlocked countries. Accordingly, the maritime domain has become a focus of the AU Agenda 2063 and the subject of the 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy (AIMS).²⁵ Both recognize the maritime domain's pivotal role as a catalyst for Africa's economic resurgence and socio-economic change.²⁶ The Lomé Charter was adopted in 2016 by the AU as a binding maritime security and safety charter with focus on security provisions of the 2050 AIM Strategy.²⁷ AU commitments are linked to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 14, which promotes the sustainable use of oceans, seas, and marine resources, including for development.

This collaborative international approach finds its concrete expression at the regional level where nations sharing maritime security interests have built practical agreements and frameworks for cooperation at the operational level. For example, the Yaoundé Code of Conduct established cooperation between member states of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), creating a jointly staffed Inter-regional Coordination Center to organize cooperation. These frameworks have helped facilitate the harmonization of maritime laws on issues such as hot pursuit, evidence sharing, and extradition as well as providing for tracking functions between navies. Although some joint capacities are still developing there have been notable successes. One is the recapture of the *Hailufeng 11* in May 2020, after its capture by pirates off the coast of Côte d'Ivoire. Through regional information sharing and operational cooperation between Benin and Nigeria, the vessel was successfully recaptured, and the pirates were tried in Nigeria under a new anti-piracy law.²⁸

African states' collective governance of their maritime domain determines their ability to deliver an array of benefits to citizens and provide security and development. Improving governance and security in the littoral communities most affected by natural resource theft can also help diminish threats by enhancing their willingness to cooperate with law enforcement and limiting community involvement in maritime crime.²⁹ There is also more work to further the national laws and practices in place to facilitate the prosecution of maritime criminals, especially when cross-border and regional cooperation is required. Many littoral African nations are still developing chain of custody procedures for the handling of maritime criminals and evidence; prosecution can also be challenging due to the complexities of the law of the sea, or low levels of maritime legal or law enforcement expertise.

However, implementing these strategies by moving them from “paper to practice” and from “policy silo to policy integration” is challenging, as it requires effective coordination, information flow, and holistically addressing various maritime issues that are interconnected.³⁰ Assisting the AU, Regional Economic Communities, and African countries in implementing and reviewing their current maritime security strategies – as well as assisting the countries without strategies to develop them – may remain important for African security partners such as the U.S. and the International Maritime Organization.

Discussion Questions:

- What is the economic potential of the African maritime space and do you think this potential is being fully realized? Why or why not?
- Why do you think the African maritime security is important for US national security?
- As the nature of threats facing the African maritime space is transboundary, to what level has the U.S. been successful in supporting African countries to coordinate their responses to maritime insecurity?
- Given the growing undue influence of Russia and China in the African maritime space, what can U.S. do to help African countries to develop and implement their maritime security strategies, as well as to strengthen their maritime law enforcement capacity, legal expertise, and national navies?

Readings:

“Enhancing Maritime Safety and Security in Africa: Whole of Africa Maritime Dialogue,” Expert Roundtable summary, July, 27-28 2021: <https://africacenter.org/programs/mss-dialogue-2021/>

Ian Ralby, “Trends in African Maritime Security.” Africa Center for Strategic Studies *Spotlight*, 2019, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/trends-in-african-maritime-security/>

Ifesenachi Okafor-Yarwood, “Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and the complexities of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for countries in the Gulf of Guinea.” *Marine Policy*, vol. 99 (January), p. 414-422, 2019, <https://research-repository.st-andrews.ac.uk/handle/10023/19919>

Plenary Session 5: Cyber Threats and Challenges

Objectives:

- Explore how the spread of information and communications technology in Africa is influencing Africa's economic, geopolitical and security landscape.
- Assess national, regional, and international approaches to managing Africa's cyber-related threats.
- Discuss how the United States can help African states, private sector actors and citizens manage cyber threats without undermining political liberties and freedoms.

Background:

With the rapid spread of digital technology across the African continent, cyberspace is becoming an increasingly important security domain. A growing number of African citizens are falling victim to online fraud, theft, and extortion perpetrated by organized, and increasingly globalized, cyber-enabled criminal networks. Africa's critical infrastructure, essential to the continent's future prosperity, is becoming vulnerable to cyber sabotage, evidenced by recent ransomware attacks against Transnet, the South African port operator.³¹ Expanding telecommunications infrastructure and the proliferation of cheap malware has enabled foreign powers and African states alike to transform the intelligence industry, exposing African states to novel forms of cyber-enabled espionage. Disinformation campaigns, organized by foreign and domestic actors, have fueled conflict, hate speech, and undermined elections. Social media, open-source intelligence, and unmanned systems are increasingly deployed by armed state and non-state actors in Africa's conflicts, changing the character of warfare.

The policy response in most African countries has not kept pace with this rapidly diversifying array of cyber threats. Deficits in human and organizational capacity mean that most cyber incidents go unreported and unaddressed. Though the number of states with cyber security policies and strategies are rising, even Africa's most cyber mature countries often have not yet established key interagency coordination mechanisms and may not be anticipating the latest threats. The commitment of African nations to inclusive, transparent, multi-stakeholder models of internet governance and international cooperation on cybersecurity ranks significantly behind the rest of the world, according to International Telecommunications Union.³² Only eight African countries have ratified the 2014 African Union Convention on Cyber Security and Personal Data Protection.³³ Crucial issues such as protecting critical infrastructure or regulating the norms of interstate behavior in cyberspace are not yet addressed through robust policy frameworks at the national, regional, and international level.

U.S. interests in Africa have cyber-related dimensions to them. Even as business in Africa will be increasingly central to the future of the U.S. tech industry, China has become Africa's leading supplier of most kinds of digital technology. Russia is using disinformation campaigns based in Africa to undermine U.S. elections and subvert governments in dozens of African countries. Africa-based organized cybercriminals have stolen billions of dollars from American states, individuals, and enterprises. Nevertheless, U.S. cyber-related engagement in Africa, by most measures, lags behind its allies and adversaries.

Discussion Questions:

- How is information and communication technology influencing Africa's security landscape now, and what role is it likely to play in the future?
- How do African governments, regional organizations, and citizens differ in their view of their countries or region's key cyber-related challenges and threats than the United States?
- In what ways can the United States assist African nations in reaping the benefits and minimizing the security risks that come with digitization?

Required Readings:

Nate D.F. Allen, "Africa's Evolving Cyber Threats." Africa Center for Strategic Studies *Spotlight*, January 19, 2021, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/africa-evolving-cyber-threats/>

Nanjira Sambuli, "Africa is a Strategic Techno-Geopolitical Theater. Will the Continent's Leaders Take Advantage of This?" Africa Policy Research Institute, June 9, 2022, <https://afripoli.org/africa-is-a-strategic-techno-geopolitical-theatre-will-the-continent-leaders-take-advantage-of-this>

Abdul-Hakeem Ajijola and Nate D.F. Allen, "African Lessons in Cyber Strategy." Africa Center for Strategic Studies *Spotlight*, March 8, 2022, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/african-lessons-in-cyber-strategy/>

Module 2: Security Governance Challenges

Plenaries in this module will explore the complex relationship between politics, economics, and security in Africa. Sessions will showcase recent trends in democratization, governance, and rule of law as well as address how U.S. actors can help to reinforce democracy and sound security sector governance on the continent. The role and interests of external actors in Africa – such as Russia and China – will also be discussed and evaluated, alongside potential American responses to the malign aspects of U.S. competitor engagement. The module concludes with a case study focusing on the political crisis in the Republic of Sudan. This session will analyze the state of civil-military relations within the context of the country’s ongoing transition, explore how these can affect security outcomes, and discuss the role of United States in promoting more accountable security sector institutions on the continent.

Plenary 6: Democracy, Rule of Law and Security Sector Governance

Objectives:

- Examine the progress, challenges, and opportunities African countries face in achieving representative, democratic governance based on the rule of law.
- Discuss the importance of a democracy and rule of law to citizen safety and security in Africa.
- Identify the ways in which the United States can help to reinforce democracy, rule of law, and sound security sector governance in Africa.

Background:

The state of democracy in Africa is arguably one of the most controversial and difficult questions facing the continent today. Democracy's importance for providing citizen security and safety is based on a balance of powers between different branches of government, such that open political competition and the exercise of civil liberties are possible. Strong legislatures and independent judiciaries make executive branch actions more legitimate, transparent, and accountable to citizens, including in the domains of defense and security. In a democratic system, citizens are also key holders of rights in the exercise of representative, democratic governance, and are entitled to use these rights in a range of peaceful and legal ways to resolve disputes and express preferences. Building upon this logic, the current U.S. Strategy for Sub-Saharan Africa emphasizes that "effective, legitimate, and accountable militaries and other security forces are essential to support open, democratic, and resilient societies and to counter destabilizing threats" in Africa; it recommends further investment in institutional capacity-building with African partners that fosters a social contract between the state and citizens.

The history of democracy and rule of law in contemporary Africa is rich. Despite the belief that independence and self-rule would lead to more responsive governance, colonial legacies of repression, divide-and-rule politics, and inequitable development were surprisingly resilient. From soon after independence until 1989, African states generally stalled in their transitions to democracy, with Botswana, The Gambia, Mauritius, Senegal, and Zimbabwe being notable exceptions. After the end of the Cold War, Western and Soviet aid to Africa declined, leaving leaders of authoritarian regimes more exposed to popular pressures than before. Beginning with Benin, from 1989-1995, thirty-five African countries embarked upon "democratic experiments," transitioning to multiparty regimes.³⁴ Some grew into vibrant democracies, and others reformed their constitutions but remained largely or partially authoritarian in practice.

While many countries have made notable progress in improving representative governance and enhancing state-society relations, others are regressing. Despite this regression, Afrobarometer's public opinion surveys done in 34 countries show that, on the whole, democracy is in demand by most African citizens, even if it is also undersupplied by African leaders. Seven in ten Africans affirm that "democracy is preferable to any other kind of government," three-quarters reject military rule, and two-thirds favor parliamentary oversight of the president. Furthermore, grassroots organizations – including those that mobilize youth to advocate for transparency and accountability – have been at the forefront of civic engagement to strengthen governance.³⁵

At the root of some of Africa's stalled democratization efforts lie weaknesses in the *rule of law*: the principle that all people are treated equally under the law, regardless of who they are. Rule of

law is also a core element of sound security sector governance, which facilitates the provision of legitimate security to citizens on the basis of democratic and civilian control of the security sector. The professionalism of the security services, as well as citizens' perceptions of it, hinge upon having a system of checks and balances that ensures everyone respects civil liberties, human rights, and the rule of law. Formal, national-level oversight institutions (like parliaments, inspectorates, military ombuds institutions, independent anti-corruption and human rights commissions) play a key role in monitoring security force behaviors toward citizens; civilian leaders should also be overseen by the same or similar institutions. The work that security officials do with citizens to solve everyday problems, address threats, and build resilience also matter. On the Ibrahim Index of African Governance, African countries' performance on security and rule of law has declined over the last decade, but anti-corruption efforts are one area where modest but sustained increases are visible.³⁶

Discussion Questions:

- What do recent attempts to unconstitutionally take power through coups, extend presidential term limits, and subsequent citizen responses indicate about the state of democracy across Africa?
- How can partner governments engage African governments on issues of fundamental freedoms, civil liberties, and transparent oversight of elections, and what role is there for U.S. security partnerships to take on these issues with relevant African stakeholders?
- What practical measures can U.S. partners take in their work with African colleagues to promote the rule of law in the security sector? How can they help to ensure that defense and security forces build relationships with citizens that facilitate both fair/equitable enforcement of the law and respect for human rights?

Required Readings:

Joseph Asunka and E. Gyimah-Boadi, "Do Africans Want Democracy – And Do They Think They're Getting It?" *The Washington Post*, October 22, 2021,

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2021/10/22/do-africans-want-democracy-do-they-think-theyre-getting-it/>

Joseph Siegle and Candace Cook, "Infographic: Circumvention of Term Limits Weakens Governance in Africa." Africa Center for Strategic Studies *Spotlight*, 2020/2021, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/circumvention-of-term-limits-weakens-governance-in-africa/>

Catherine Lena Kelly, "Justice and Rule of Law Key to African Security." Africa Center for Strategic Studies *Spotlight*, 2021, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/justice-and-rule-of-law-key-to-african-security/>

Plenary Session 7: External Actor Influence

Objectives:

- Assess Russian and Chinese economic, political, and security engagement in Africa.
- Discuss the security implications of Russian and Chinese engagement in Africa.
- Consider how the United States can help African partner nations address the malign aspects and undue influence of Russian and Chinese engagement with Africa, particularly in security sector.

Background:

Over the past decade, external actors, including Russia and China, have significantly increased their engagement with African states. African countries tend to view engagement by external actors simultaneously as a source of opportunity and risk.

Russia has rapidly expanded its influence in Africa in recent years. Its primary objectives in Africa include establishing a naval presence in North Africa and the Red Sea, gaining access to resources, displacing Western influence, and undermining the liberal democratic order. To pursue these interests, it has deployed what might be called an “elite co-optation” or “state capture” approach, using low-cost and high-influence tools such as mercenaries, election interference, and offering arms in exchange for resources. In countries such as Libya, Sudan, Mali, and the Central African Republic, Russia has successfully leveraged this approach to prop-up beleaguered, repressive regimes. In each country, Russian influence has been destabilizing, generally running counter to the interests of African citizens even as it advances the interests of certain elites or factions.

As disruptive as Russian activity has been, its overall influence in Africa is dwarfed by China. Over the past decade, China has risen to become Africa’s largest trading partner and a key supplier of critical technologies and infrastructure, from highways to government buildings to telecommunications networks. More African leaders attend the Forum on China Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), held once every three years, than the U.N. General Assembly. The Chinese partnership model emphasizes reciprocity and mutual dependency, and has cultivated close political, educational, and institutional relationships across Africa. It is an increasingly critical financier and supplier of troops for U.N. peacekeeping operations and is actively seeking to expand its military footprint in places such as the Red Sea and the Atlantic. Nevertheless, the relationship between China and its African partners is often deeply asymmetrical and at times transactional. Chinese political patronage networks, economic investments, and trade relationships often lack transparency, undermining the interests of citizens.

United States foreign policy in Africa faces rising challenges because of increased engagement by China, Russia, and other emerging powers. In an environment of where U.S. defense strategy has recognized inter-state strategic competition as a significant threat to the United States, China and Russia are doing much to undermine U.S. values and interests in Africa. However, wary of past colonial legacies and habituated to unequal relationships with external powers, most African states see value in engaging with a wide variety of partners and do not welcome being forced to choose between the many external actors seeking to engage with them. For the United States to maximize its appeal as a strategic partner of choice and a creditable alternative to some of the more malign aspects of Chinese and Russian influence, U.S. policymakers must understand and appeal directly to the needs of African states and the interests of African citizens. One way they

may be able to do this is by supporting the development and implementation of security strategies that are people-centered and advance African visions of national and citizen security that allow for African partners to leverage donor assistance in ways that reinforce locally owned planning, management, and delivery of security and safety in line with such visions.

Discussion Questions:

- What are the key security implications of expanding Russian and Chinese engagement in Africa for African countries?
- What are the key security implications of expanding Russian and Chinese engagement in Africa for the United States?
- What mutual interests do the United States and African nations have in reducing the malign aspects of Chinese and Russian influence? How can the United States support African partner nations in advancing their mutual interests?

Required Readings:

Joseph Siegle, "Russia's Strategic Objectives and Influences in Africa." Testimony Before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, July 14, 2022, <https://africacenter.org/experts/russias-strategic-objectives-and-influences-in-africa/>

Paul Nantulya, "The Forum on China-Africa Cooperation at 21: Where to Next?" Africa Center for Strategic Studies *Spotlight*, September 3, 2021. <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/focac-forum-china-africa-cooperation-21-where-to-next/>

Lina Benabdallah, "China's Soft-Power Advantage in Africa." *Foreign Affairs*, December 23, 2021, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/africa/2021-12-23/chinas-soft-power-advantage-africa>

Plenary 8: Civil-Military Relations: Sudan in Comparative Perspective

Objectives:

- Analyze how African civil-military relations influence security outcomes in Africa through their influence on coups, conflict, and political transitions across the continent.
- Examine how civil-military relations have influenced Sudan's ongoing transition.
- Discuss how the United States can help African governments to forge a new civil-military relations that foster more transparent, effective, professional, and accountable security service institutions.

Background:

Civil-Military Relations is the study of the interaction between security forces and the societies they are meant to protect. It may be defined as both formal and informal bargaining between three key stakeholders: citizens, civilian government authorities, and security sector actors, including the military.³⁷ A core tension running through the field of civil-military relations is the question of “who guards the guardians.”³⁸ Because security forces control a society's means of coercion, it is not always easy to ensure that they abide by the norms of professionalism, accountability, and respect for civilian authority that are the hallmark of democratic societies. Scholars have long studied the impact of civil-military relations on security outcomes such as conflict, coups, democracy, and popular protests.

Civil-military relations have been shaped by, and have had an important impact on, Africa's security challenges. For many African leaders, threats from a coup d'état and from non-state armed actors are among the most significant concerns. To meet these threats, many African leaders have subjected their security forces to tactics such as identity-based stacking, counterbalanced them with powerful irregular security forces and militias, or encouraged them to pursue extensive extra-budgetary business interests. Along with other factors such as external support, colonial legacies, political contestation, and economic development, these tactics have significantly influenced the development of African security forces, affecting everything from their ability to fight, their respect for civilian authorities, and their willingness to protect citizens. Generally, the adoption of these tactics undermines the professionalism of security forces, reducing their contributions to democratic rule. The countries that have avoided or minimized them are among the continent's most peaceful and stable.

Sudanese civil-military relations under its recently deposed dictator, Omar Al-Bashir, are an example of how security forces whose professionalism has been undermined by political leaders can become a source of recurrent source conflict, political instability and authoritarian rule. To varying degrees, Al-Bashir's regime adopted all of the tactics listed above. The senior ranks of Sudanese security institutions were stacked with Islamist party members, as well as members of northern 'riverain' tribes around Khartoum that constitute less than ten percent of Sudan's population but have dominated its political institutions since independence. To counterbalance the influence of the regular military, Al-Bashir set up powerful parallel military institutions including the Popular Defense Forces, the General Intelligence Service, and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). Both the RSF and Sudan's regular army, the Sudanese Armed Forces, have cultivated significant business interests in sectors such as gold, agriculture and telecommunications. As a result of these factors, security forces in Sudan are perhaps the country's greatest obstacle to achieving a peaceful transition to democracy.

Discussion Questions:

- How do trends in African civil-military relations relate to the recent increase in coups?
- What are the main opportunities and challenges the United States and other external actors face in assisting African security leaders to forge new civil-military relations that foster transparent, professional, and accountable security institutions?
- What needs to be done to ensure that the Sudanese security forces play a productive role in ensuring a transition to peaceful, prosperous, democratic rule? What can the United States do to assist this process?

Recommended readings:

Emile Ouedraogo, "Advancing Military Professionalism in Africa," *Research Paper No. 6*. Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 2014, pp. 1-3, <https://africacenter.org/publication/advancing-military-professionalism-in-africa/>

Kwesi Aning and Joseph Siegle, "Assessing Attitudes of the Next Generation of African Security Sector Professionals," *Research Paper No. 7*. Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 2019, pp. 1-2, <https://africacenter.org/publication/assessing-attitudes-next-generation-african-security-sector-professionals/>

Nathaniel Allen and Luka Kuol, "Civil-Military Relations and Sudan's Treacherous Path to Democracy," *Texas National Security Review*, 2021, <https://tnsr.org/roundtable/policy-roundtable-the-military-and-mass-protests-in-africa/#essay3>

Susan Stigant, "Putting Sudan's Transition Back on Track," U.S. Institute of Peace, December 2021, <https://www.usip.org/publications/2021/12/putting-sudans-political-transition-back-track>

MODULE 3: NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND USG RESPONSES

The final module features plenary discussions on various responses to security challenges. Plenaries will examine the development and implementation of national security strategy and resource management as critical for addressing security challenges in Africa. It will discuss the role of regional actors in addressing Africa's most pressing security challenges. The last session will discuss the policies U.S. diplomats, development and governance practitioners, and security actors can pursue to build strategic partnership, as well as support African partners in improving transparency, governance, and effectiveness.

Plenary 9: National Security Strategy and Management of Security Resources

Objectives:

- Discuss the importance of National Security Strategy and security resource management in achieving transparent, legitimate, and accountable security outcomes.
- Highlight key trends, challenges, obstacles and lessons learned in National Security Strategy and security resource management in Africa.
- Highlight opportunities for the United States to assist African countries, particularly African security sector leaders, to develop and implement inclusive and people-centered national security strategies and foster the judicious management of security resources.

Background:

African countries face fiscal challenges in allocating and managing security resources, particularly military spending. Military spending in Africa is high and persistently rising, and even defied the fiscal challenges posed by COVID-19.³⁹ In 2020, military spending in Africa exceeded \$43 billion, up from \$15 billion in the 1990s. While global military expenditure increased in 2020 by 2.6 percent from 2019, it increased in Africa by 5.1 percent.⁴⁰ In relation to aggregate government spending, African military spending accounted to 8.2 percent in 2020, compared to a global average of 6.5 percent.

Despite the rise of military expenditures in Africa, national security, citizen security and safety, and the trust of citizens in the police and military have been deteriorating.⁴¹ Interestingly, the countries that increased their military expenditures in 2020 tended to be autocracies and/or countries exposed to violent conflict. In the highly fragile environment in Africa, the provision of uncoordinated security force assistance is likely to be ineffective and counterproductive in countering insecurity and violent conflicts.⁴²

This growing evidence shows that more military spending *per se* does not improve security and safety. It can instead create a conducive environment for the abuse of state power, leading to the state's use of violence against citizens, the misalignment and deficient allocation of public resources, and corruption in the use of security resources.⁴³ If not guided by long-term people-centered policies with a clear security vision, objectives, and priorities, military spending risks sustaining an insecure environment in which conflict becomes a lucrative enterprise that allows the militaries to justify high levels of expenditure.⁴⁴ This is unlikely to win the trust of citizens, as it crowds out investment in much-needed public services - such as health, education, and justice. In addition, there are growing concerns that the security sector, particularly defense, in Africa is not adhering to common budgetary principles such as comprehensiveness, contestability, legitimacy, accountability, and transparency, which has led to increased corruption and off-budget expenditures and revenues.⁴⁵

One of the drivers of this unconstrained high military spending is that the allocation of resources to the militaries is generally guided by defense policies that are grounded in a military-centric definition of strategy, as well as by the assumption that more military spending will result in better national security.⁴⁶ Often, these defense policies are not publicly available and in most cases are created and implemented without the scrutiny of parliaments and the involvement of citizens, and without adherence to core budgetary principles. A possible way of constraining high military spending in Africa is by assisting willing partners in developing inclusive and

citizen-centered national security strategies that can guide the formulation of sectoral security policies and rationalize the allocation of resources to the security sector.⁴⁷ In several African cases, it has been shown that a well-designed and inclusive process for formulating national security strategy can produce good strategy and enable decision-makers to plan better to address security threats and effect long-term positive change in protecting citizens.⁴⁸

Discussion Questions:

- What factors do you think contribute to high military spending globally and particularly in Africa, and is such spending justifiable?
- How effective is the U.S. security assistance to Africa in fostering institutions that ensure civilian oversight, anti-corruption, professionalism, transparency, accountability and the alignment of security resources with national priorities? Please share successful and unsuccessful examples.
- In light of the undue influence of Russia and China in African security sectors, what can U.S. security assistance do to help African countries develop and implement locally owned, inclusive, and people-centered national security strategies to guide future partnerships?

Required Readings:

Bernard Harborne, William Dorotinsky and Paul Bisca (Eds.), "Securing Development: Public Finance and the Security Sector." The World Bank, 2017, p. 7-14, 25-47,
<http://www.sipotra.it/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/SECURING-DEVELOPMENT.-Public-Finance-and-the-Security-Sector.pdf>

Africa Center for Strategic Studies, "National Security Strategy Development in Africa: Toolkit for Drafting and Consultation," 2021, <https://africacenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/National-Security-Strategy-Development-in-Africa-Toolkit-for-Drafting-and-Consultation-Africa-Center-for-Strategic-Studies-2022-01.pdf>

Luka Kuol and Joel Amegboh, "Rethinking National Security Strategies in Africa". *Journal of International Relations and Diplomacy*, Vol 9(1): 1-17, 2021.
<http://www.davidpublisher.com/Public/uploads/Contribute/60a72058556ba.pdf>

Plenary Session 10: Regional Approaches to Conflict Management in Africa

Objectives:

- Understand the challenges and opportunities of regional and sub-regional responses to African security challenges.
- Assess regional security and defense policies, architectures, and mechanisms for responding to regional security challenges.
- Discuss how the United States can advance relationships with key regional actors, such as the United Nations, African Union, and the Regional Economic Communities, to improve security provision in Africa.

Background:

There is a strong regional dimension to conflict in Africa and the spread of conflict has a destabilizing impact on the region. The cross-border aspects of conflict include armed groups that are coerced and driven across borders to fight, exploitation and trade of natural resources that fuel conflict at a regional level, and flows of refugees who are forced to flee their homes. The current spread of instability and terrorist attacks in West and east Africa offers a powerful example of regional contagion.

While the African Union (AU) and the United Nations (UN) have historically played large roles in efforts to address conflict and to establish continent-wide security and norm-building mechanisms, the regionalization of conflict has led to the growing role of Africa's regional economic communities (RECs) in the creation of regional conflict management mechanisms. Since the 2000 Lomé Summit of the AU, which laid a foundation for the adoption of the AU Constitutive Act, the RECs have been recognized as critical stakeholders in addressing conflict. They are also mandated to accelerate the continent's economic development by facilitating integration and cooperation between African states. Furthermore, RECs have increasingly become the arenas for forging norms on governance and democratization, and for adopting regional security and defense policies, strategies, and coordination mechanisms.

Today, while all RECs have adopted conflict resolution mechanisms, considerable differences exist between them regarding the political commitment, scale, and success of their sub-regional collective security initiatives. Differences in perceptions between regional actors have limited the effectiveness of regional approaches for conflict management. These differences relate, for example, to the legitimacy of a government, the dimension of a humanitarian crisis, or the root causes of a conflict (whether national or regional origin). The dilemma, however, is which perception should prevail in defining a response to a crisis, i.e., the regional or the national perception. Furthermore, the effectiveness of RECs varies greatly based on leadership dynamics, political and cultural cleavages, and the depth of member states' integration. Yet when conflict and violence know no borders, prevention cannot either.

Enhancing leverage of the RECs on prevention efforts including early warning and early response will be instrumental for peace and security continent wide. Enduring solutions to Africa's security and political problems will require placing regional institutions at the center of stabilization efforts. But they cannot play a leading role without further buy-in from states, tailored and evidence-based action at subnational levels, and renewed international engagement.

Discussion Questions:

- What are the advantages and disadvantages of regional actors responding to crises?
- How can early warning and response systems be made effective in responding to security threats in the region?
- How can the United States best support regional actors such as the African Union and the RECs in addressing conflict and security challenges in Africa?

Required Readings:

Cedric De Coning, "Are UN Peace Operations Effective?" International Peace Institute Global Observatory, November 14, 2019,

<https://theglobalobservatory.org/2019/11/are-un-peace-operations-effective/>

Africa Center for Strategic Studies, "Resolving Africa's Conflicts: Toward an African Model of Peace Operations," June 2016, <https://africacenter.org/events/resolving-africas-conflicts-toward-african-model-peace-operations>

Paul Nantulya, "The African Union at 20: Much Accomplished, More Challenges Ahead," Africa Center for Strategic Studies *Spotlight*, February 22, 2022, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/african-union-20-much-accomplished-more-challenges-ahead/>

Plenary Session 11: United States Government Partnership and Assistance to Africa

Objectives:

- Provide an overview of U.S. foreign policy objectives, partnerships, and Africa-focused programs.
- Examine the objectives and mechanisms of U.S. security assistance to Africa.
- Discuss challenges, lessons learned, and ways to improve partnerships between the United States and Africa to address Africa’s most pressing security challenges.

Background:

Released once during every U.S. Administration, the U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa recognizes that Africa “plays a critical role in advancing global priorities to the benefit of Africans and Americans.”⁴⁹ The Strategy identifies four main objectives for the United States in Africa: fostering fair and open societies, delivering democratic and security dividends, advancing pandemic recovery and economic opportunity, and supporting conservation, climate adaption, and a just energy transition. The Strategy builds on decades of broadly supported defense, diplomatic, and development-oriented engagement by the United States in Africa, with notable achievements including initiatives such as the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), the President’s Emerging Initiative for Aids Relief (PEPFAR), the Security Governance Initiative (SGI), the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI), and Power Africa.

The United States has long pursued what is called a “3-D approach,” combining defense, diplomacy and development efforts to help address Africa’s security threats and challenges. Under this approach, each of the three main agencies responsible for U.S. foreign policy has significant security or security-related responsibilities. In addition to its role as the lead overall agency responsible for U.S. foreign policy, the State Department, through its support for peace operations and international military education and training, oversees a portion of U.S. security assistance. USAID, through its Bureaus of Conflict Prevention and Stabilization and Humanitarian Assistance, provides support to address the underlying drivers of conflict and conflict relief efforts. In its most recent 2022 theater campaign plan, the Defense Department’s Africa Command (AFRICOM) has identified the following four enduring security objectives: maintain access and strategic influence, countering threats to U.S. persons, facilities and interests, preventing and responding to crises, and working with other agencies and partnered and allied nations to advance shared objectives and principles.⁵⁰

Recently, the Administration has begun to implement the 2019 Global Fragility Act, an interagency strategy to provide integrated, long-term U.S. support to locally-driven efforts to prevent large-scale violence. Coastal West African countries of Benin, Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, and Togo, as well as Libya and Mozambique, have been selected as partner countries for this effort, which will receive up to \$200 million annually.

Despite bipartisan support for whole-of-government partnerships aimed at enabling African countries to address their security challenges, U.S. and broader international efforts to promote stability in Africa face significant challenges. After a period of advancing democracy and peace in the early part of the 21st century, conflict, coups and extremism have risen in recent years, while democracy in many parts of Africa has stagnated and declined. U.S. competitors, including China and Russia, have significantly expanded their political, economic and security activity in Africa in

recent years. And U.S. international security assistance efforts in many parts of the continent have not been successful in enabling African nations to build institutions with the characteristics needed to address Africa's security challenges, including being civilian-led, representative, transparent and accountable to citizens, and hospitable to strategic leadership.

Discussion questions:

- What are the primary United States foreign policy and security interests in Africa? Why should Africa be of concern to U.S. policymakers?
- What are the main ends, ways, and means of the Administration's recently released Africa Strategy? How does the strategy approach Africa's security challenges?
- How can the United States pursue more sustainable, long-term, and effective security partnerships with African states?

Key U.S. Strategy and Policy Documents:

The White House, "U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa," 2022, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/08/08/fact-sheet-u-s-strategy-toward-sub-saharan-africa/>

Gender Stephen Townsend, "United States Africa Command 2022 Posture Statement," 2022, <https://www.africom.mil/2022-posture-statement-to-congress/>

U.S. Department of State Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations, "United States Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability," 2022, <https://www.state.gov/united-states-strategy-to-prevent-conflict-and-promote-stability/#goal-4>

Secondary Readings and Analysis:

Catherine Nzuki and Mvemba Dizolele, "The Potential and Limits of the New U.S. Strategy for Sub-Saharan Africa," Center for Strategic and International Studies, August 2022, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/potential-and-limits-new-us-strategy-sub-saharan-africa>

Stephen Watts et al., "Reforming Security Sector Assistance for Africa," RAND Corporation Research Brief, 2018, https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_briefs/RB10028.html

Nicholas Marsh, Øystein H. Rolandsen, Julian Karssen & Marie Sandnes, "Compounding Fragmentation: Security Force Assistance to Fragile States in the Sahel and Horn of Africa," PRIO Paper, 2020, <https://www.prio.org/publications/12347>

MODULE 4: SUDAN SIMULATION EXERCISE

This simulation exercise is designed to help participants come to terms with how African civil-military relations can influence security outcomes in Africa by examining Sudan's ongoing transition. Through role-play, participants will be asked to appreciate the competing perspectives of African civil and military actors. By considering the role that external actors play in helping African states to navigate periods of political transition, participants will be asked to appreciate the important role that countries like the U.S. can have in shaping state security across the continent.

The simulation materials will be distributed one week prior to the seminar by e-mail and should be consulted in advance of the exercise on September 15-16.

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- ¹ Peter Mwai, "Are Military Takeovers on the Rise in Africa?" BBC, 2022. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-46783600>
- ² Luka Kuol, "COVID-19: A call for people-centered national security strategy in Africa." PRIO, 2020. <https://blogs.prio.org/2020/11/covid-19-a-call-for-people-centered-national-security-strategy-in-africa/>
- ³ Camilla Roca and Ines Schultes, "Africa's Youth: Action Needed Now to Support the Continent's Greatest Asset." Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2020. <https://mo.ibrahim.foundation/sites/default/files/2020-08/international-youth-day-research-brief.pdf>
- ⁴ Gilfred Boateng Asiamah, Ousmane Djiby Sambou, and Sadhiska Bhoojedur, "Africans say governments aren't doing enough to help youth." Afrobarometer, 2021. <https://afrobarometer.org/publications/ad486-africans-say-governments-arent-doing-enough-help-youth>
- ⁵ Julia Bello-Schunemann et al, *African Futures: Key trends to 2035*. Institute for Security Studies, 2017. <https://issafrica.s3.amazonaws.com/site/uploads/policybrief105.pdf>
- ⁶ Wendy Williams, "Shifting Borders: Africa's Displacement Crisis and its Security Implications." Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 2019. <https://africacenter.org/publication/shifting-borders-africas-displacement-crisis-and-its-security-implications/>
- ⁷ Raymond Gilpin, "Unpacking the implications of future trends for security in Africa." Brookings, 2020. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2020/02/03/unpacking-the-implications-of-future-trends-for-security-in-africa/>
- ⁸ Palik, Júlia; Siri Aas Rustad and Fredrik Methi. (2020) Conflict Trends: A Global Overview, 1946–2019, *PRIO Paper*. Oslo: PRIO.
- ⁹ Africa Center. (2022a). "Surge in Militant Islamist Violence in the Sahel Dominates Africa's Fight against Extremists". Infographic. Washington: Africa Center for Strategic Studies, January 24.
- ¹⁰ Palik et al, op cit.
- ¹¹ Cilliers, J. (2018). "Violence in Africa: trends, drivers and prospects to 2023". *Africa Report 12*. Institute for Security Studies.
- ¹² Raymond Gilpin, "Understanding the Nature and Origins of Violent Conflict in Africa," in *Minding the Gap: African Conflict Management in a Time of Change* by P. Aall and C. Crocker, 2016.
- ¹³ Luca Raineri, "If Victims Become Perpetrators: Factors contributing to vulnerability and resilience to violent extremism in the central Sahel," International Alert, June 2018; "Journey to Extremism in Africa: Drivers, Incentives, and the Tipping Point for Recruitment," United Nations Development Program (September 2017), <http://journey-to-extremism.undp.org/en/reports>
- ¹⁴ United Nations; World Bank. 2018. *Pathways for Peace : Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict*. Washington, DC: World Bank, <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/28337>
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