

SENIOR LEADERS' ROUNDTABLE: LESSONS LEARNED IN ADAPTING AFRICAN PEACE OPERATIONS TO VIOLENT EXTREMIST THREATS

January 22-24, 2025
United Nations Headquarters, Conference Room 5

AGENDA

Roundtable Summary

The Africa Center for Strategic Studies (ACSS), in collaboration with the United Nations (UN), and New York University's Center for International Cooperation (CIC), is pleased to convene senior leaders and experts to discuss how peace operations can address the growing threat posed by violent extremist (VE) groups. Participants will include current and former force commanders, mission heads, representatives from the UN, African Union, and Regional Economic Communities, USG officials, and experts, all of whom bring valuable experience in peace operations. The discussions will focus on strengthening Africa's regional security architecture in response to the VE threat and exploring how peace operations can effectively contribute to this effort.

This roundtable comes at a critical juncture, as the threat from VE groups has escalated significantly over the past decade, leading many African states to pursue alternative security solutions. Traditional peace operations have faced challenges in adapting to these new realities, underscoring the urgent need for reform to address complex threats. The discussions will compare peace operations with other multilateral approaches to countering VE threats, aiming to develop actionable and implementable solutions. The roundtable objectives are as follows:

1. Convene senior peace operations leaders and experts to discuss experiences, lessons learned, and good practices in regional efforts to address violent extremism.
2. Identify opportunities for the United Nations, African Union, and other multilateral actors to improve their responses to violent extremist groups.
3. Catalyze the development of regional solution frameworks to address the violent extremist threat.

January 22 Day 1: Assessing Peace Operation Doctrines to Address Violent Extremism

1000-1130 OPENING CEREMONY AND SEMINAR INTRODUCTION

Undersecretary Jean-Pierre Lacroix, *Undersecretary General for Peace Operations, United Nations*

Ambassador Fatima Mohammed, *Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations*

Major General Kenneth Ekman, *West Africa Coordination Element Lead, United States Africa Command*

Ambassador Martin Kimani, *Distinguished Fellow, Center on International Cooperation, New York University*

Colonel (ret.) Daniel Hampton, *Acting Director, Africa Center for Strategic Studies*

Moderator: **Dr. Nate Allen**, *Associate Professor, Africa Center for Strategic Studies*

1130-1200 BREAK AND GROUP PHOTO

1200-1330 SESSION 1: UN AND AFRICAN PSO DOCTRINE TO ADDRESS VIOLENT EXTREMIST INSURGENCIES

Panelists: **Major General Cheryl Ann Pearce**, *Acting Military Adviser, Department of Peace Operations of the United Nations*

Mr. Idriss Mounir Lallali, *Acting Director, African Center for the Study and Research on Terrorism, African Union*

Ms. Martha Pobee, *Assistant Secretary-General for Africa, United Nations*

Moderator: **Colonel (ret.) Daniel Hampton**, *Acting Director, Africa Center for Strategic Studies*

1330-1430 Lunch

1430-1600 SESSION 2: REGIONAL GEOPOLITICS AND AU PEACE ENFORCEMENT OPERATIONS IN SOMALIA

Panelists: **Dr. Andre Le Sage**, *Director, Sage Research*

Lieutenant General (ret.) Diomede Ndegeya, *Former Force Commander, African Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS)*

Dr. Seth Appiah-Mensah, *Chief Joint Operations Center/Integrated Information Hub, United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia*

Moderator: **Colonel Sean McClure**, *Senior Military Advisor, Africa Center for Strategic Studies*

1600-1630 Break

1630-1800 SESSION 3: PARALLEL INTERVENTIONS IN THE SAHEL

Panelists: **General (ret.) Dennis Gyllensporre**, *Associate Professor and Researcher at the Department of Political Science at the Swedish Defense*
Ambassador Maman Sambou Sidikou, *Senior Adviser on Central Sahel for United States Institute of Peace and Senior Adviser Africa for Center for Civilians in Conflict*

Moderator: **Ambassador Martin Kimani**, *Distinguished Fellow, New York University Center for International Cooperation*

January 23 Day 2: Comparing Peace Operations with other Regional Models and Mechanisms

1000-1130 SESSION 4: CIVIL-MILITARY COOPERATION IN THE LAKE CHAD BASIN

Panelists: **Dr. Anouar Boukhars**, *Professor, Africa Center for Strategic Studies*
General (ret.) Lucky Irabor, *Former Chief of Defense Staff of Nigeria*
Ms. Rania Mohamed Osman Mohamed Hadra, *Regional Advisor on Sahel, Regional Bureau for Africa, United Nations Development Program*

Moderator: **Dr. Nate Allen**, *Associate Professor, Africa Center for Strategic Studies*

1130-1200 Break

1200-1330 SESSION 5: REGIONAL MILITARY AND INTELLIGENCE COORDINATION IN COASTAL WEST AFRICA

Panelists: **Dr. Amandine Gnanguênon**, *Associate Research Fellow, European Council on Foreign Relations*
Major-General Michael Ayisi Amoah, *Force Commander, Multinational Joint Task Force of the Accra Initiative*

Moderator: **Dr. Anouar Boukhars**, *Professor, Africa Center for Strategic Studies*

1330-1500 Lunch

1500-1700 ROUNDTABLE: ASSESSING MULTILATERAL MECHANISMS AND MODELS TO ADDRESS VIOLENT

Panelists: **Mr. Oliver Ulich**, *Head of the Performance and Protection Pillar, Division of Policy, Evaluation and Training, United Nations*

Mr. Zinurine AlGhali, *Senior Political Coordinator, Africa Union Permanent Observer Mission to the United Nations*

Ms. Bitania Tadesse, *Policy Specialist for Africa, International Peace Institute*

Moderator: **Ms. Sophie Rutenbar**, *Visiting Scholar, New York University Center for International Cooperation*

1800-2000 RECEPTION AT UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS

January 24 Day 3: Comparing Peace Operations with Bilateral and National Responses

1000-1130 SESSION 7: COMPARING UN AND DRC-LED EFFORTS TO CONFRONT THE ALLIED DEMOCRATIC FORCES (ADF) IN THE DRC

Panelists: **Major General Dr. Augustin Mubiayi Mamba**, *Director General, College of Advanced Studies of Strategy and Defense, CHESD-DRC*

Ms. Leila Zerroughi, *Former Special Representative and Head of the UN Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*

Major General Patrick Dube, *Former Force Commander of United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO)'s Force Intervention Brigade and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM)*

Moderator: **Mr. Herbert Loret**, *Team Lead, Light Coordination Mechanism, Division of Policy, Evaluation and Training, United Nations*

1130-1200 Break

1200-1330 SESSION 8: COMPARING RWANDAN AND SAMIM EFFORTS TO ADDRESS EXTREMISM IN MOZAMBIQUE

Panelists: **HE Ambassador Professor Mpho Molomo**, *Former Head of SAMIM and Special Representative to the Chairperson of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defense and Security Cooperation*

Brigadier General Patrick Karuretwa, *Director General International Military Cooperation, Republic of Rwanda*

Ms. Liesl Louw-Vaudran, *Senior Adviser to African Union, International Crisis Group*

Moderator: **Dr. Daisy Muibu**, *Assistant Professor, Africa Center for Strategic Studies*

1330-1430 Lunch

1430-1600 **SESSION 9: GROUP DISCUSSION ON RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADVANCING MULTILATERAL RESPONSES TO VIOLENT EXTREMIST THREATS**

**Facilitated
by:**

Dr. Nate Allen, *Associate Professor, Africa Center for Strategic Studies*

Ms. Sophie Rutenbar, *Visiting Scholar, New York University Center for International Cooperation*

1600-1630 Break

1630-1730 **CLOSING, EVALUATION, AND NEXT STEPS**