ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT IN THE SECURITY DOMAIN SEMINAR

HYBRID SEMINAR

INFORMATION NOTE

WHAT: The Africa Center for Strategic Studies (ACSS) will conduct a seminar for 16 African security sector officials to discuss and exchange good practices in designing, drafting and implementing policies, strategies, or strategic guidance to address the security implications of the proliferation of artificial intelligence (AI).

WHERE: Online, via Zoom for Government and in Washington, DC

WHEN: Online February 20-21, March 13-14, and April 3-4 (all online sessions held from 1200-1500 GMT). In person April 23-25 in Washington, DC.

WHO: 16 security sector officials will be invited from the following countries: Algeria, Angola, Cameroon, Cote D'Ivoire, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, and Tunisia. The target audience is mid-senior level security sector officials, civilian or uniformed, who are responsible for employing artificial intelligence to address security threats their countries are facing, mitigating growing AI-amplified threats to national security, or developing AI-related strategy and policy. Examples might include communications, intelligence, or targeting officers integrating AI into intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR), targeting, or decision support systems (DSS); officials in president's or national security advisor's offices incorporating AI into national security or defense strategies; or police or park rangers deploying AI-driven image recognition to gather evidence or identify suspects.

WHY: As artificial intelligence becomes more accessible and sophisticated, its implications for African security are growing. Artificial-intelligence powered systems are already being used in Africa as part of surveillance and smart-policing platforms to respond to threats from non-state armed actors. AI-driven image recognition systems are being incorporated into unmanned systems to enable them to select and engage targets. Finally, artificial intelligence is serving as amplifier of threats from disinformation and cybercriminal networks, who increasingly use AI-based tools. As AI systems become more powerful, AI is likely to have even more profound effects on the organizational strategies, intelligence gathering capabilities, and tactics of armed groups in Africa. The proliferation of AI also raises the possibility of unintended consequences, as well as profound moral, legal, and ethical questions about the role of human beings in systems of warfare that are becoming increasingly autonomous.

The global community is still in the incipient stages of developing strategies, policies, and norms to deal with the security challenges posed by the spread of artificial intelligence. This seminar is an opportunity to expand understanding, build a community of practice, and identify strategic solutions to address the proliferation of AI across the security sector.

HOW: The program will consist of three two-day virtual sessions (February 27-28, March 13-14, April 3-4), followed by a 3-day capstone seminar in Washington, DC (April 23-25). The virtual sessions will focus on 1) AI's broad security implications and uses in the military and security domain, 2) how to address threats and threat actors whose activities are being amplified by AI and mitigating AI risk, and 3) development of AI policy and strategy in the security domain. Each day of the virtual component will last approximately three hours, beginning with a plenary session and followed by a group discussion. Plenary Sessions 2 (AI-Amplified Threats), 3 (AI Security Strategy, Principles and Good Practices), and 6 (Regional and International Cooperation in Africa) will be offered as webinars.

The seminar will culminate with an in-person capstone in Washington, DC from April 23-25. Participants must attend all online sessions to be eligible to attend the capstone. One week prior to the capstone, participants will be required to submit a draft paper assessing AI's impacts on their security domain in their countries and offering strategic insights for how to leverage AI to address their country's security challenges. Participants will participate in expert-facilitated discussions to present their papers, receiving feedback from both experts and participants. The intent is for the papers to inform the development of an AI strategy toolkit. The workshop will be conducted in French and English, and under strict rules of non-attribution.