

The GLOCEPS

— Daily Influential Brief —

Research and Analysis in Defence and Security

Towards a renewed mandate for AMISOM beyond 2021: next steps for the African Union

Dr. John Mwangi

Somalia stabilization process remains fragile without an extended AMISOM mandate. As the African Union anticipates a renewal post-December 2021, our Senior Research Fellow, Defence and Security, Dr John Mwangi, analyses three key issues that would matter in the renewed mission.

Dr. K.O. Asembo, Editor-in-Chief



Photo Credit: AMISOM

The Africa-EU Partnership

Introduction

A communique issued by the African Peace and Security Council (PSC), an organ of the African Union on 8th February 2021 indicates the prospect of a renewed mandate for the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) post December 2021. This communique recommends the constitution of an independent assessment team that would offer recommendations for a new AMISOM mandate. PSC is

already anticipating post conflict reconstruction and development work in Somalia. The key interventions of a renewed AMISOM mandate would include peacebuilding, state stabilization, governance, and the rule of law. Increasingly, African led peace support operations are being touted as significant interventions in a context previously dominated by western actors. Troop contributing countries to AMISOM have been





keen to project their interventions as relevant from the point of local context and knowledge, even though represent in part the envisaged models by regional intervening states. This paper situates three areas of intervention that

will matter in a renewed AMISOM context post 2021. These include funding, a multi-dimensional mandate and strengthening the command and control functions.



Photo Credit: African Union Headquarters

Strengthening the funding component

A critical area that will impact on the outcomes of a renewed mandate lies in the area of funding. AMISOM operations have been previously hampered by the lack of requisite and predictable funding framework to support the operations. A renewed mandate would have to be dependent on funding from the United Nations (UN), European Union (EU) and partners such as the US and the UK that have previously supported her interventions. The funding support should also attract other partners across the globe. This support would however need to be regular, predicable, and sustainable for AMISOM operations. The mission has for more-than a decade in Somalia experienced irregular

allocation of funds thereby constraining its mission's goals. This in addition presents an added opportunity for actualizing the mantra of African solutions for African problems. This focus on African solutions is then appropriated to justify the relevance and value of local agency in peace operations.

The AU Peace and Security Architecture has a component of the peace fund and which can be configured to support the mission's work in Somalia. The decision to tap on this fund for peace and security operations has however been put on hold till 2023 owing to insufficient members' contributions to the fund.





Innovating on a multi-dimensional mandate

A planned AU independent assessment of the AMISOM mission that is due by May 2021 would distill lessons on how a new mandate could be structured. Given the growing threats from the Al-Shabaab and other armed opposition groups, counter-insurgency operations will be critical alongside other state stabilization interventions. A robust civilian component would be required to support the rule of law, governance and security sector reform initiatives. These would eventually pave way for the Somali's security forces to take over the security functions in Somalia. Critical to the formulation of a new mandate is the need to incorporate local

voices on how the state is to be refashioned. This would allow for local experiences to count but also to offer a level of local legitimacy and ownership in the new mandate. There is a growing criticism by critical peace studies scholars that interventions such as AMISOM continue to apply western centric prescriptions of state building. These would privilege the legal-bureaucratic functions of states to the detriment of local context and agency. This multi-dimensional mandate could for instance account for 'clan politics' and nuance the local context of how the Somali state should be reconfigured.



Photo Credit: AMISOM





A unified command and control structure

A third related step would be the need for a unified command and control structure between the AMISOM headquarters and the troop contributing countries (TCCs), which are stationed across the different sectors in Somalia. This coordination has been lacking in the current mandate. Moving forward, coordination would be required to ensure operational mandates of

AMISOM runs seamless unlike in the past. A coordinated operation across sectors shall be useful in threat analysis, operational planning and lessons learning. Moreover, the value of coordination also means that cross-sector operations can be prioritized and serve to degrade actors such as the Al-Shabaab.



Photo Credit: AMISOM

The Africa Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes

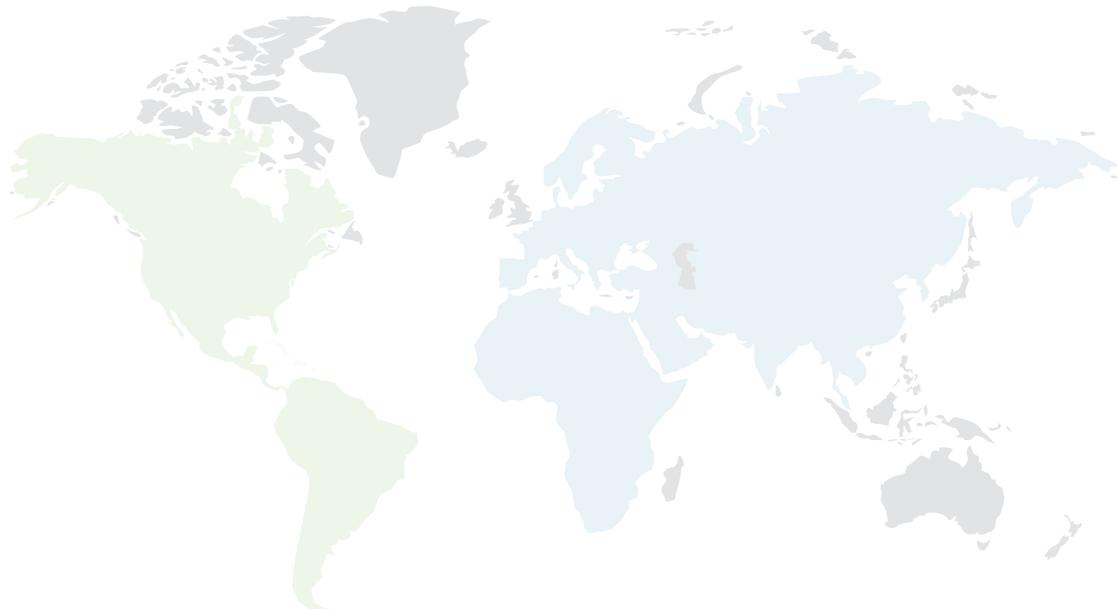
Prospects

A renewed mandate for AMISOM and its operational effectiveness shall be dependent on the outcomes of an independent led assessment of the AMISOM operations currently underway. The new mandate and its areas of intervention needs to be anchored on lessons learnt on the gaps of the previous mandate. The African Union and the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and related partners should explore a secure funding framework for AMISOM operations in Somalia in the context of a renewed mandate. The regional integration bodies should prioritize security sector reforms, the command and control functions of AMISOM troops contributing countries but also civilian functions to stabilize Somalia in a renewed mandate





Dr. John Mwangi is GLOCEPS Senior Resident Research Fellow for Defence and Security. He holds a PhD in International Relations from the United States International University (USIU-A), Nairobi, Kenya. He is an alumni of Next Generation Social Sciences in Africa Fellowship a program of the Social Science Research Council (SSRC), New York. His research interests are in the areas of peace, security and development in The Horn of Africa. He has published on policing, refugees, counter-terrorism, and identity politics in The Horn of Africa. He is passionate about finding synergies and connections between academia and the policy world. His latest publication is a 2021 co-authored article appearing in the *Journal For Deradicalization* titled: Communities' Perceptions of Reintegration of Al-shabaab Returnees in Mombasa and Kwale Counties, Kenya available at <https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/435>



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Off Kiambu Road, Nairobi Kenya
P.O. Box 27023-00100, Nairobi.
Telephone: 0112401331
Mobile: +254 700 279635
Email: info@gloceps.org
Web: <https://www.gloceps.org>

