

Africa–EU Relations and the African Continental Free Trade Area

Edited by

Samuel Ojo Oloruntoba

Christopher Changwe Nshimbi

Leon Mwamba Tshimpaka

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This book is dedicated to all Africans and Europeans working to promote mutually beneficial and a win-win partnership between their continents through open, honest and frank collaboration.

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Foreword

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) provides a unique opportunity to reimagine, restructure and recalibrate the relationship between the European Union and the African Union. As a continental initiative, AfCFTA represents the aspirations of African countries to restructure their economies in ways that can lead to inclusive development and higher contribution to regional and global value chains through engagement in more intra-African trade. Through this continental agreement, the African Union seeks to project the collective aspirations of Africans to develop together.

As a departure from the previous regime of nationalistic politics, in which each African country engages with the European Union on trade issues, AfCFTA will provide the vehicle for African Union–European relations. The power asymmetries that have defined the previous regime of negotiation at national level versus the European Union provide justification for this new approach. Since 1975, when the European Commission and the African Caribbean and the Pacific states signed the Lomé Convention, which provided non-reciprocal access for African countries to the European markets, through to the Cotonou partnership agreement of 2000, Africa has not made significant progress on exports. Its share of global trade has also reduced from what it was before these agreements. Worse still, exports of raw materials and imports of manufactured products from Europe have continued to predominate this relation of unequal exchange.

The contention over the Economic Partnership Agreements remained unresolved before the European Commission initialled the new EU/Africa–Caribbean-Pacific Partnership Agreement in April 2021. The agreements not only reflect the limits of unequal power relations but show the lack of symmetry between the two continents. Correcting these unequal relations demands that the ongoing reforms in the African Union should be sustained in order to ensure that the organisation truly reflects the interests of Africans and represents the voices of the various countries in their engagement with Africa.

This book represents a significant effort towards analysing the various aspects of EU–African relations and how the AfCFTA can foster new forms of win–win relationships. The chapters in this volume consider various aspects of EU–African relations, including trade and migration. The

7 African Conflicts, AU-EU Strategic Partnership on Peace and Security and the Implementation of African Continental Free Trade Agreement

Shittu Raji and Abosede Omowumi Babatunde

Introduction

This chapter examines the implications of African intra-state conflicts for the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA). It also explores how the AU-EU Strategic Partnership on Peace and Security mediating roles in African conflicts can mitigate the adverse impacts of the conflicts on the effective implementation of AfCFTA. Drawing on the theory of business security and secondary data, the chapter demonstrates that the intra-state conflicts in some part of Africa can undermine the realisation of the objectives of AfCFTA, which include trade liberalisation among African countries, continental market integration, empowerment for African women and the agenda of a single African market. Recent studies on AfCFTA have emphasised the prospect and constraints that the project may pose for Africa's expansive and diverse businesses and trading opportunities (Mutanga, 2017; Roth, 2019; Anesu, 2020; Banton, 2021). While the existing literature has also examined the intersection between African trade and conflicts on the continent, little is still known about the wider implications of intra-state conflict in some African states and the incapacity of regional and international organisations to adequately deal with the security threats for the prospect of the AfCFTA project.

This study will build on the existing literature by analysing the profound implications of violent intra-state conflict in some parts of Africa for the prospects of the AfCFTA initiative. The chapter poses the following research questions: How do violent intra-state conflicts in some parts of Africa and the attendant security threats impact on the implementation of AfCFTA and what have been the intervention efforts of the EU and AU in dealing with such security threats and the potential for enhancing the optimal implementation of AfCFTA?

The AfCFTA, which was launched on 1 January 2021 (African Union, 2021) with agreement signed on 5 February 2021 at the Rwanda Summit of the African Union (AU) in Kigali, is a socio-economic development platform aimed at creating market integration with a view to promoting a mega and harmonised business environment and industrial growth through developmental trade regionalism based on fair trade deals for all the participating

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countries. The proposed launch of the project on 1 July 2020 was postponed to 1 January 2021 due to the outbreak of the Covid-19 Pandemic. With membership cutting across 54 African countries (excluding Eritrea), AfCFTA is currently the world's largest regional trading arrangement by sheer volumes of membership (Kin, 2019).

As noted by the AU (2021:6), the AfCFTA, which covers trade in lawful goods and services, investment and intellectual and property rights, is expected to boost the trading incomes and livelihood of nearly 68 million Africans who live on less than \$5.50 a day and to boost Africa's income by \$450 billion by 2035, with anticipated increment of business profit by 7 percent (Africa Renewal, 2021). The trading agreement is projected to add \$76 billion to the income of the rest of the world and increase Africa's exports by \$560 billion, mostly in manufacturing. It is also expected to spur larger wage gains for women, estimated at 10.5 percent for women and 9.9 percent for men (AU, 2021:7).

The realisation of these important objectives of AfCFTA has been threatened by deadly intra-state conflicts in some African countries. According to Reliefweb (2020), intra-state-based conflict is relatively high in Africa with over 13 conflicts fought in 2019 alone over border disputes, ethno-religious conflict, indigene-settler squabbles, agro-terror conflict between farmers and herdsmen, insurgency, terrorism and violent separatist agitation, especially in South-eastern and Northern Nigeria, Northern Cameroon, Burkina Faso, Mali, Somalia and Burundi. As of 2019, nine countries in Africa, including Cameroon, Niger, Chad, Nigeria, Libya, Burkina Faso, Mali, Somalia and Mozambique, were or are still involved in one form of conflict or another (Reliefweb, 2020).

While inter-state conflict in Africa has reduced drastically to zero level, there has been a disturbing rise in intra-state conflicts in some African countries, involving one-sided conflict by non-state actors who unleashed violence on innocent citizens or the state to achieve their goals and objectives (Global Conflict Tracker, 2021). Notable examples of the most lethal of such one-sided conflicts are the Boko Haram insurgency in North-Eastern Nigeria along the Lake Chad region and the separatist groups in South-Eastern Nigeria respectively, which have led to battle-related deaths of more than 60,000 lives and the loss of property worth 38 billion Naira (N8 billion) between 2009 and 2019 (Reliefweb, 2020:2). Other examples include the Al-Shabaab violent extremist group, which operates primarily in Eastern African countries of Somalia and Kenya, and Tuareg rebels in Mali, while the North Africa sub-region and many parts of the Sahel region remain the stronghold of Al-Qaeda in the Maghreb (AQIM) (Malley, 2020). Although the insurgent groups operate from their bases, they often receive weapons and training in other regions, including Somalia, Algeria and Libya (Global Conflict Tracker, 2021:2). The fluidity of these cross-border insurgents confirms the globalisation of African one-sided conflicts because of the fact that though they operate basically from their bases, insurgency and terrorist

groups have connections across African countries and support one another tactically in combatant operations (Roth, 2019). Also included in the list of one-sided conflicts (OSC) in Africa are deadly smugglers that have been waging serious trading wars against state security agencies to further their smugglings activities (AU, Report 2020:3).

In whatever ways and means violent conflict is being waged, be they state or one-sided confrontations, the major fallout of the scenario in Africa has been their negative effects on trade, investment and business environments as many markets have been subjected to ceaseless attacks through the use of direct explosives, suicide bombings, burning of markets and attacks on market traders in transit (Aroge, 2021). The devastating impact of conflicts on the business environment in Africa includes lulls in and collapse of business due to unsecured business environment, while foreign business investors have divested greatly from the conflict spots. Many of the youth who constitute an industrial productive force have been lost to the conflicts. Women are the major casualties in these violent conflicts, as they experience all forms of gender and sexual-based violence and the deaths of children and husbands, while they have also increasingly participated actively in these armed conflicts in myriad ways (Coulter, 2008; MacKenzie, 2009; Matfess, 2020; Ripero-Muñiz, 2020). The weak institutional capacity of the African states to adequately deal with this destructive conflict and improve the security environment has continued to hamper trading opportunities and put businesses under serious survival threat (Babatunde et al., 2021).

The efforts of regional and international organisations to tackle the perennial conflicts in some African states have achieved limited impact in terms of resolving these conflicts. Rather, African conflicts have persisted, with old ones linked to state building projects in Africa still unresolved, and the emergence of new ones over unhealthy struggles for resources, political power, governance challenges, the rise of insurgents and terrorists and climate change impacts (Watts, 2004; Goulden and Few, 2011; Thurston, 2016; Kambela, 2019). Therefore, it is important to explore in this chapter the implications of the realities of African conflicts for AfCFTA, taking cognisance of the importance of a peaceful environment for the successful implementation of the trade agreement.

The chapter is divided into seven sections. In addition to the introduction, the next section provides a review of the relevant literature on the prospects of AfCFTA as a vehicle for Africa's socio-economic development. The section that follows provides the theoretical and analytical framework, drawing on business security theory in explaining how the insecurity linked to intra-state conflict in some African countries can undermine the potential of AfCFTA. The subsequent section offers insights into the historical background, Strategic Action Plans and Institutional Framework of AfCFTA. This is followed by an analysis of the potential of AU Peace Initiatives, the AU-EU Strategic Action Plan and then the EU Peace and Security Initiatives in Africa to tackle and mitigate African conflicts as a panacea for a secure

and conducive environment for AfCFTA implementation. The next sections explore the implication of the protracted intra-state conflict in some African countries for the prospects of AfCFTA, and offer concluding remarks.

AfCFTA and Africa's potential for socio-economic development

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) flagship projects were designed by the AU as key programmes and initiatives to accelerate Africa's socio-economic growth and sustainable development. In particular, AfCFTA was established as part of the AU Agenda 2063 to accelerate intra-African trade and boost Africa's trading position in the global market (African Union, 2021). Also, AfCFTA aims at significantly accelerating the growth of intra-Africa trade more effectively as an engine of growth and sustainable development in Africa by doubling intra-Africa trade and strengthening Africa's common policy space in global trade negotiations (AU, 2019).

Emerging studies on the AfCFTA have focused on its potential and its operational reality within the business environment in Africa. Theophile (2019) explained that AfCFTA has great potential to enhance the competitiveness of members' economies through improved training, to facilitate sufficient business funding and diversification of African products from primary to secondary and to add value to their foreign exchange earnings. AfCFTA is projected to eliminate tariffs on intra-Africa trade, which will increase profit for businessmen and make it easier for Africans to trade within Africa and benefit from their own mega markets, generating bigger customer potential from the continent's population of nearly 6 billion (Theophile, 2019:4).

The work of Banton (2021) discusses the opportunities that AfCFTA can provide for African businesses to deepen cooperation, while emphasising the need for African governments to consult relevant stakeholders to put credible economic policies in place before the take-off of the project. In his submission, Kin (2019) stresses the need for African countries to boost intra-regional trade infrastructure for increased trade volumes. This can be achieved through the improvement of both hard social infrastructure, such as trading ports, roads and railways, and the improvement of soft infrastructure, such as customs procedures at borders to enhance border efficiency in the importation and exportation of intra-African goods (Kin, 2019).

Anesu (2020) studied the relevance of AfCFTA to African Small Scale Industry (SMEs), which account for up to 80 percent of businesses and make up about 40 percent of the national income. The authors advocate for their proper integration into the AfCFTA project, in the anticipation of increased access to AfCFTA mega markets for optimal sales and improved profits. Mutanga (2017) establishes the nexus between trade, economic growth and conflict. He postulates that the relationship between low levels of national trade income and the incidence of violent conflict is one of the most widely studied in economic literature, noting that more than half of the African countries with a GDP per capita of US\$2000 or less in 1990–1991 experienced

some form of civil war between then and the year 2000 (Mutanga, 2017). These findings confirmed the assertion that conflict is inimical to trade, domestic or international, leading to huge losses of trading opportunities. Thus, conflict exerts negative influence on trade, economic growth and development due to its disruptive effects on trading and economic activities such as agriculture, services, tourism and the financial market. Wade (2010), using bilateral trade data for a set of 96 countries for the period 1999–2000, to estimate the cost of war on trade found that on the average, the volume of trade was significantly reduced by violent conflict and terrorist incidents. This scenario might also play out with AfCFTA if African conflicts are not well managed.

Most of the studies have focused on the benefits and challenges that would likely face Africa's businesses and trading opportunities, while little attention is given to the nexus between trade and conflict generally, and specifically to the likely effects of conflicts in Africa on the AfCFTA project. More so, the impact of the joint Africa–EU strategy (JAES) towards trade integration, peace and security in Africa in addressing African conflicts and enhancing the prospect of AfCFTA has not been adequately studied. Until now, evaluation of the progress of economic integration across Africa has centred on the eight African Union–recognised Regional Economic Communities, including the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), all primarily aimed at deepening intra-regional trade without a continental study as envisaged under AfCFTA. This study intends to address the highlighted gaps in the literature with a view to projecting how African conflicts, and the regional and international intervention efforts to deal with these conflicts, can affect the prospects of AfCFTA.

Theoretical postulation

This study is anchored on the Theory of Safety and Security as explained by Ludek Lukas (2016). The authors posit that safety and security are top priorities for the success of any human endeavour and that the rationale behind security of business is to keep such business afloat under a secured operational atmosphere. The essential focus of business security includes the security of business entities, business entrepreneur/factory workers and the operational environment. The authors identify different kinds of business security threats, including physical attacks on goods and service providers and business facilities, cyber-attacks against e-businesses and the involvement of many business entities in risky insurance policies and premiums.

The theory of safety and security also emphasises the security of businessmen and their factory workers, including security of jobs and livelihoods from erroneous government economic policies that undermine optimal economic performance and enthrone profit loss (Lukas, 2015).

should focus on the need for a secured business atmosphere devoid of insecurity and protected from all forms of criminal activities, such as terrorism, insurgency and armed banditry; and non-criminal activities, including administrative “bottle necks” and draconian economic conditions, such as excessively high lending rates and taxation, which make it difficult for businesses to survive.

Lukas (2015) avers that business security theory can be analysed on the basis of four relevant variables—business threat analysis, risk analysis, crisis analysis and causality analysis—in order to come up with the required strategic action plans to mitigate business insecurity. The business threat analysis poses the following questions: What type of business is being threatened—legitimate or illegitimate? What is the value, volume and effects of such threats on the business performance and survival, and what is the rate of effectiveness of current efforts at securing such a business from operational danger? In providing answers to these questions, Lukas (2015) articulates the need to understand the current business security threat reality in order to come up with the right approaches to securing such businesses optimally. The risk business security analysis model focuses on the identification of specific risk involved in business operations and the likely consequences of the identified threats to such business, and specifies how to overcome the risk. The application of risk analysis to business security also evaluates which threats or negative acts affect the business more and which ones are less significant in order to identify the worst possible impact of threats (Aven, 2015). The risk, which can be appraised quantitatively and qualitatively, is determined by the size of the negative impact or the current harm being done to the business and by the probability and vulnerability of the business to internal and external attacks if not checked.

Samujh (2011) posits that crisis is a dangerous phenomenon, which has negative influence on businesses as it often leads to business collapse and necessitates efforts on the part of government agencies, security agencies and businessmen to monitor safety and security trends around businesses and to address all forms of insecurity arising from such trends to avert a business crisis. The causality model of business security analysis identifies the relational fallout between the cause and effect of insecurity on the business environment (Ayodele, 2015). Causality is central to the theory of business safety and security as it establishes a logic chain of causes and effects of security on the business environment. The theory of business security is very relevant to this discourse because safety and security are top priorities for the success of any human endeavours, particularly a continental trade project like AfCFTA. The prospect of AfCFTA implementation depends on a secured business environment that can facilitate optimal realisation of its objectives. The protracted intra-state conflicts in some African states create an unsecured environment that can undermine the realisation of the noble objectives of AfCFTA if not well managed through concerted national, regional and international intervention efforts.

Historical foundation, strategic action plans and institutional framework of AfCFTA

The Agreement establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) was negotiated from 2016 to 2018 by African Union (AU) countries while the preparatory documents were opened for signature on 21 March 2018 at the 10th Extraordinary Summit of the AU Heads of State and Government in Kigali, Rwanda (AU, 2018). At that Summit, 44 AU member states signed the AfCFTA agreement, with others signing later. By February 2020, 54 of the AU's 55 member states, all except Eritrea, had signed the AfCFTA Agreement (Abdulrahman, 2020).

The AfCFTA Agreement entered into force on 30 May 2019, 30 days after the deposit of the 22nd instrument of ratification, while the AfCFTA's operational phase was launched on 7 July 2019 at the 12th Extraordinary Summit of AU Heads of State and Government in Niamey, Niger (AU, 2019). In relation to the AU preparatory works towards the success of AfCFTA, the Union has commissioned different layers of national, sub-regional and continental policymakers to engage the private sector to support the AfCFTA project (AU, 2020:6). At the national level, the top priority is the finalisation of schedules of tariff concessions on trade in goods and schedules of specific commitments on trade and services by each AfCFTA Member State (Tralac, 2015). As at 15 December 2019, 11 countries, including Ghana, South Africa, Nigeria and Egypt, had submitted their tariff offers, while many AfCFTA officials have been trained in the use of the online business negotiations tool. AfCFTA Trade Fairs have commenced in five priority sectors—business, communication, financial, transport and tourism services—with the inaugural Intra-African Trade Fair (IATF) in Cairo, Egypt (AU, 2020:4).

AfCFTA is also being promoted by the AU through the establishment of the National AfCFTA Implementation Strategies (NAIS) with the participation of key stakeholders, especially the business communities, which has been largely facilitated by their Export Promotion Councils, while the technical input for the full commencement of the AfCFTA project is being supported by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) (AU, 2020). The Commission produces an annual AfCFTA Business Index report to measure and monitor business experiences of each member country, and the level required for them to meet the AfCFTA implementation standard for optimal performance and benefits.

The European Union (EU) contributes to the AfCFTA politically, financially, technically as well as through policy support and provided support worth over €74 million to the AfCFTA from 2014 to 2020 (Selssie, 2023). The EU has a €2.2 billion European Investment Trading Facility for Africa being managed by the European Investment Bank (EIB) (AU, 2021:6). The essence of this fund is to provide loans for foreign private investors who wish to invest in Africa. The EU earmarked another €500 million to finance the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), a sub-regional trade agreement

with Africa. This is a form of trade arrangement that encourages Africa to integrate into the world economy through the WTO rules by way of trade liberalisation to help Africa diversify its export and build its regional market with uniform rules and create more market access for African goods in the international market. However, challenges inhibiting regional and global intervention efforts in African conflicts constitute setbacks to the contributions of the global partners to the AfCFTA project.

The AU peace initiatives for AfCFTA implementation

The African Union was quite aware from the outset that Africa's quest to foster market integration with optimal benefits could be futile unless deliberate steps were made to guarantee peace and security on the continent (AU, 2020:6). While establishing the nexus between business and conflict, the AU through the AfCFTA document (2020) noted specifically that Africa is largely fragmented along ethno-religious and other parochial divides, and the continent is home to some of the world's most protracted armed insurgencies, conflicts and political violence, which explains why intra-African trade accounts for only 18 percent of overall trade across the continent (AU, 2020). Recognising the need to prioritise trade as a tool to address Africa's conflict challenges, AfCFTA amplifies the need for mass employment of African youth through trade investment to discourage them from being mobilised by extremist groups, given that most conflicts in Africa are primarily executed by jobless youth, stricken by high levels of poverty. Thus, the AfCFTA, through the promotion of more labour-intensive trade, has the vision of providing more jobs for the estimated 30 million African youth, as a means of empowerment to prevent their involvement in conflict and crime (Kin, 2019:2).

The AU has deployed its conflict resolution mechanisms—including the launching of the Silencing the Guns in Africa by 2020 campaign at the 50th anniversary of the OAU/AU in 2013 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia—and socio-economic institutional platforms to create inclusive multi-sectoral programmes that address the economic, social and environmental causes of conflict, with the primary aim of generating employment for about 600 million unemployed, uneducated or insecure young people in Africa to prevent them from taking up arms (AU, 2021:3). These socio-economic institutional frameworks towards peace focused on conflict in the most troubled spots, including the Sahel, the Lake Chad Basin, Central African regions, Eastern Congo, the Horn of Africa, Sudan, South Sudan and Libya (Zipporah, 2019:3). Through the Silencing the Guns campaign, the efforts of the AU thus focused on surrendering of illegally acquired light weapons used in crime, urban violence, community conflicts and cattle rustling, among others, to allow a secure trading environment. Significantly, the African Standby Force, operational since 2016, and the sub-regional security institutions, including the ECOWAS Stand-by-Force (ECOMOG), have also been established to enhance the

implementation of AfCFTA in a peaceful environment, while the AU has deployed peacekeepers to many trouble spots in Africa, including Somalia, Central African Republic, Darfur and the Lake Chad Basin to intervene in conflict. AU community projects on reconciliation and peace-building have been established in many countries.

The AU also liaises with the Regional Economic Communities that are coordinating conflict management and peace enforcement actions in their domain, including the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Peace Support Operation in Mali (AU, 2020: 6). The AU also enlisted civil society, non-governmental organisations, community leaders and the media in member states to provide basic counselling on peaceful co-existence, assisting the affected communities in reconciliation efforts. It is thus evident from the above strategies towards a peaceful business environment that the peace support and conflict intervention initiatives of the AU, if well implemented, would no doubt aid the success of AfCFTA. It however remains to be seen if the AU has the logistic and financial capacity and other relevant resources to facilitate the effective implementations of the peace project. This is even more uncertain given the existing constraints that undermined the efforts of the AU Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) to address African conflicts, which have been largely ineffectual due to several factors including the lack of commitments of African states to provide financial support (AU, 2020). Though the AU introduced the Silencing the Guns initiative to manage conflict in Africa, the biggest challenge has been the optimal domestication of the campaign by member states, as many countries are not developing a functional national plan to implement it optimally. The overdependence of the AU on external partners such as the European Union for support on conflict mitigation in Africa has not resulted in sufficient positive outcomes (Ero, 2013; Eric and Amegan, 2019).

AU–EU Joint Strategic Partnership towards Trade and Security in Africa

The African Union (AU) and European Union (EU) developed a Strategic Partnership Agreement in 2005 as a Joint Africa–EU Strategy to promote Africa's trade accessibility to the EU markets. The partnership was designed to enhance the continent's global trade competitiveness and improve her foreign exchange earnings and make European goods accessible in African markets (Council of European Union, 2007). Through this joint agreement, the EU was saddled with the responsibility of helping Africa to increase the local productive capacity through knowledge and technological transfer from Europe to enable the continent to compete favourably within the global market and be less dependent on the export of primary raw materials, a critical factor that accounted for the deterioration of terms of trade in Africa within the globalisation process. The AU–EU agreement equally centred on the EU

mandate to work with other Africa's international partners in the G8 to promote global fair trade in favour of Africa.

The partnership was equally anchored in skills development for Africans in support of the industrialisation process, aimed at converting activities from the informal to formal business sectors to enable more women to participate in the formal African economy (AU, 2020). The different layers of the AU-EU strategic partnership in the area of trade and investment, according to the Council of European Union (2007), broadly included the "implementation of Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) with African EPA regions (West Africa, Central Africa, Eastern and Southern Africa and the Southern African grouping), which involve the RECs and other African organisations, and the implementation of the EU-Mediterranean Free Trade Agreement with the countries of North Africa" (EU, 2007). Through the EPA implementation process, trade is being more effectively used in Africa to boost traders' income in order to reduce poverty levels and promote women's empowerment in the continent.

To facilitate functional implementation of the AU-EU strategic partnership, cooperation between Africa and the EU has rapidly developed and diversified from trading relations to enhancement of regional security to allow for maximum business security. Specifically, both sides have developed political strategies and policy documents to guide their cooperation in the area of trade and security within the EU-Africa Strategy of 2005 to promote inter-regional trade through sustainable peace and security. This is premised on the notion that a mutually benefitting trading relationship between the two continents can only be achieved in a peaceful and secure business environment (European Commission, 2019). A major objective of the Africa-EU strategic partnership on trade, peace and security is to strengthen and promote industrialisation, regional integration and fair trade migration in Africa in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015 in a peaceful atmosphere. However, this objective has remained only partly achievable due to challenges posed by the protracted conflicts in some African states and the ineffectual regional and international efforts to deal with these conflicts and the insecurity that have undermined the AU-EU partnership's laudable agenda.

EU peace and security initiatives in Africa

Based on the Africa and EU Strategic Partnership as discussed in the last section, the EU has been a critical donor to the African Union's (AU) conflict prevention efforts, providing funding through the African Peace Facility (APF), an EU Dedicated Fund (EDF), since 2004—even before the establishment of the comprehensive AU-EU Peace and Security Strategic action plans in 2005 (Nicoletta Pirozzi, 2010). Thus, the evolution of EU Funding for African Peace and Security started in 2004 with the establishment of the African Peace Facility (APF) fund in response to an AU call for external

support to promote peace, security and stability in Africa. Specifically, the EU support for institutional capacity building towards peace, security, trade and investment in Africa was designed to complement the funding for African peace operations, with a view to strengthening the capacity of the AU and partnering with African sub-regional bodies to manage the deployment and control of peace operations while also engaging more prominently in conflict prevention in the continent (Crisis Group Report, 2021:7).

For instance, the EU supported the APF by providing a budget of €2.7 billion in financial support to the AU and other African sub-regional institutions for their conflict prevention efforts between 2004 and 2019 (Crisis Group Report, 2021:9). Thus, within this period, the APF was a steady and relatively predictable source of EU funding for peace and security in Africa. With its focus on supporting the AU and African sub-regional organisations in their efforts to prevent and resolve conflicts, the APF became a central pillar of AU–EU peace and security cooperation as it allowed the EU to provide the resources necessary to activate and sustain African-led missions to address peace and security crises on the continent while the AU and African states have mobilised the rapid response forces necessary to address threats on the ground (Crisis Group Report, 2021:9). The APF funding to AU and African sub-regional institutions has provided support in three critical areas, including African-led peace support operations and the African Peace and Security Architecture, which is the continent's institutional framework for peace and security (Crisis Group Report, 2021:5). The third is the APF's Early Response Mechanism, which mobilises quick financial assistance for African conflict prevention and mediation initiatives from developed institutions, especially the G8.

Despite having the smallest funding window (just €28 million between its creation in 2009 and 2018), the EU Early Response Mechanism, which has supported about 40 different initiatives across Africa in an array of conflict situations, is widely regarded as one of the most successful programmes to benefit from the fund. Through its fast-track process, the EU has responded to funding requests from the AU sometimes within ten working days, thus enabling the AU to prepare the early stages of peace support operations to quickly mount a wide range of conflict prevention initiatives such as mediation, shuttle diplomacy, the deployment of human rights observers, fact-finding missions and measures to prevent election-related violence in the earliest stages of a crisis (European Commission, 2019).

More than 90 percent of the APF has been spent on peace support operations, as the instrument has contributed to the financing of 16 African-led missions with different AU mandates ranging from ceasefire monitoring in South Sudan to supporting a peaceful, democratic transition in the Gambia and fighting Boko Haram in the Lake Chad basin (Crisis Group Report, 2021:10). From 2007 to 2019, more than €1.94 billion in APF funding

cost of troop stipends (Crisis Group Report, 2021:13). APF contributions made the EU one of AMISOM's largest donors.

In 2021, the African Peace Facility (APF) fund was replaced by the EU Funding for African Peace and Security (EFFAPS) (European Commission, 2019). Within the earlier APF facility, the AU-led missions became too dependent on open-ended EU financial support. This overdependence posed some challenges in terms of long procurement delays for arms and ammunition and problems associated with channelling funds through the AU. In response to new cross-border security threats from armed groups, especially the jihadists, African states have set up ad hoc coalition forces—such as the MNJTF fighting Boko Haram in the Lake Chad basin and the G5 Sahel Joint Force—while seeking EU funding, which was very difficult to achieve under the APF because the operations did not fall under the auspices of any of the AU-recognised regional economic communities as a condition for EU funding (AU, 2020). However, from the European perspective, there is an advantage in funding these sorts of ad hoc coalitions because (unlike in AU-led peace support operations, where external donors pay for troop stipends and equipment for peacekeepers) the affected African states commit more of their own resources in addition to troops. The EU is thus able to pay for limited assistance packages (rather than committing to long-term expenses as it did with AMISOM), reducing the operation's dependence on EU funding and, potentially, the overall costs for the EU (European Commission, 2019). The limited support from the EU to deal with such cross-border threats has significantly affected the capacity of Africa's poorly governed countries to cope with the insecurity that characterised this threat and the adverse impact on the business environment.

Moreover, finding ways to finance such ad hoc coalitions through the APF has been complicated because under the instrument's terms, eligible beneficiaries are limited to AU-recognised regional economic communities and sub-regional organisations engaged in peace and security operations under an AU Peace and Security Council mandate. The EU had to channel money for the MNJTF through the AU Commission because the APF prohibits direct payments to individual governments. Despite the allocation of an initial APF support package of €55 million over 5 years starting in early 2016, the difficulties encountered in arms procurement under the APF were attributed to weak AU processes and EU bureaucracy (AU, 2021). These delays, both in negotiating the deal in the first place and in providing funds, have had a negative impact on the ground, including at the start of the MNJTF deployment in 2015, when lack of financing left MNJTF troops in the field undersupplied during the initial phases of the force's deployment (AU, 2021).

Therefore, having discarded the APF, the EU sees the EFFAPS as an opportunity to augment bilateral support that member states and the EU are already providing for military training and capacity-building missions in Africa, including in Mali and Somalia, directly without the intervention of regional and sub-regional institutions. Under EFFAPS, the EU has the option

of bypassing the AU to directly support national and sub-regional military initiatives, including financing lethal equipment for African armies AU (2021).

However, the EU direct involvement in operational funding of peace support operations in Africa with minimal involvement of the AU often creates threats to African security architecture due to EU minimal capacity and political strategies to deal with the drivers of conflict or build trust among local populations to use the fund judiciously. As European policymakers perceive many of Africa's current security problems, from the expansion of jihadism in the Sahel to the effects of various African conflicts on uncontrolled migration, as a threat to European stability, the EU is in the process of overhauling its foreign policy funding tools and streamlining them to contemporary security challenges to make its external action more effective. The outcome of this is that the EU's direct intervention in the funding of peace-building efforts in Africa seems to have weakened the AU's role in peacekeeping on the continent, as funding under EFFAPS is no longer being exclusively earmarked for AU to distribute as it pleases, while a larger number of African beneficiaries are in dire competition for the EU Peace financial lifeline. However, the EU needs AU's expertise and local knowledge of peace support operations (Crisis Group Report, 2021). The EU's direct support to countries under security threat is very risky, especially where security forces are rife with mismanagement and corruption, making it difficult to ensure that equipment is used for the intended purposes and does not fall into the wrong hands. Militaries themselves have become a threat to security and stability, with the August 2020 military coup in Mali being a case in point (Crisis Group Report, 2021). In Africa's fragile states in particular, which are characterised by high levels of institutional and social fragility or affected by armed conflict, and where the risk of misuse of funds is especially acute, the EU's direct provision of funding arms and ammunition would not achieve the desired impact because of the potential for the mismanagement of funds or their diversion for personal use.

African intra-state conflict and the implementation of AfCFTA

Despite the efforts of the AU to implement AfCFTA in a violence-free environment, the protracted conflict in some African States is still an acute reality, and this has the potential to curtail the realisation of the main objectives of AfCFTA and thus undermine intra-African trade liberalisation, weaken continental market integration, derail the quest for women's empowerment and gender equality and scuttle the AfCFTA agenda of a single and virile African market. Though there is no doubting the fact that AfCFTA has the overwhelming potential to foster better political economies and socio-economic development in African countries, African intra-state conflicts have continued to threaten its aspirations even before the formal take-off.

The assessments of the conflict profile in some of the leading African economies from the continent's sub-regions portend grave implications for the

successful implementation of AfCFTA. In the case of Nigeria, since the beginning of post-independence in 1960, the country has continued to witness violent intra-state conflicts, including the Jos ethno-religious crisis in 2001 and 2008, Zangon-Kataf in 2009 and 2012 and Ife-Modakeke from the 1980s to 2000, among others; and one-sided non-state actor conflict, as being perpetrated by the Niger Delta militants since late 1990 and Boko Haram insurgents in Northern Nigeria since 2009 (Aroge, 2021:5). In fact, of all the security breaches and challenges in the country, none has affected the trading and investment like the Boko Haram insurgency, which has scattered many village markets that served as a potential mega cluster and foundation for a source of trading supplies for the AfCFTA project. Thus, apart from creating security breaches, the Boko Haram insurgents have had a direct negative influence on the markets, including the corporate and small-scale markets and the livelihood of traders, especially in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe State (Aroge, 2021:8). Also, the business activities of telecom operators have not been left out of the attacks of Boko Haram as some telecom masts of major mobile telephone operators were destroyed by the insurgents. In addition, the restricted use of telephone services by the military as part of the counter-insurgency strategies continued to affect the income of the mobile phone operators and businesses generally, while many of the multinational beverage companies, including Seven-Up and Coca-Cola, have closed down their operations in many places in the North (Aroge 2021:4).

In Maiduguri, Nigeria, the frequent bombings and clashes between Boko Haram and security agents have weighed down seriously on commercial and businesses activities in the city as many business outfits have crumbled, while many traders fled the State. The Maiduguri "Monday Market" which was the biggest in the city has been seriously affected with about 6,000 shops destroyed, while half of the 10, 000 shops and stalls in the market have been abandoned by traders who have fled the city (Aroge, 2021:8). Also, Banks and their customers, who are largely traders and businessmen, have been operating under difficult situations and have reduced their business hours to guard against being attacked by members of the sect.

The Baga fish market has maintained trans-border trade with other West African countries such as Chad and Cameroon and has served as an important market for international trade with traders mostly from North Africa and the Arabian Peninsula since colonial activities began in the 19th century. This fish market in Borno State was closed for over 3 years between 2014 and August 2017 due to the insurgency, before reopening with a lull in business. Roads connecting Baga to other parts of the state have virtually been closed by the military, thus cutting off many businessmen from the market. Conversely, some markets have been shut down by the military because the traders themselves are suspected to be the middlemen for Boko Haram and to be trading and smuggling food items to them, especially during late hours (Chingle, Mancha and Gukas, 2016). According to Aroge (2021:14), the market has also been targeted by the terrorists for mass bombings. This

action of closing markets frequently has impacted negatively on the livelihood of innocent market traders, especially the women who constitute the majority of the traders and have no such links with the insurgents. The AfCFTA project finds itself in a troubled market environment, as the case of the West African regional power, Nigeria, shows. The deadly atrocities perpetrated by Boko Haram in Nigeria have significantly affected inter-trade relations within the West African sub-region, with severe impacts on other sub-regions in Africa and globally.

In East Africa, the deadly attacks by the Harakat al-Shabaab Mujahideen, otherwise known as Al-Shabaab, a jihadist and terrorist religious sect based in Somalia, have had profound implications for inter-trade relations within the sub-region (Roth, 2019). The sect was an armed wing of the Islamic Courts Union (ICU), whose agenda is to establish a theocratic state in Somalia (James, 2016). Al-Shabaab, though hardly visible in the state capital of Mogadishu, controls the greater part of rural markets and trading ports in Somalia, including the port cities of Kismayo, Baware, Elwak and Jilib, its de facto headquarters, while the sect is also noticeable in the Southern part of Somalia, where it began to organise guerrilla assaults, including bombings of markets and assassinations of people, including traders in Central and Southern Somalia and other countries. In its area of jurisdiction, the insurgents enforced harsh business laws, including the prohibition of the sale of entertainment materials, including music and movies. The Al-Shabaab sect is largely being funded through piracy of businesses coming within and the neighbouring countries, especially Kenya. Kidnapping and extortion of local businesses under the protection of Al-Shabaab remains rampant. Other means of sustaining the insurgents include forced taxation on business interests under its territorial control, illicit exportation and sales of charcoal worth \$7.5 million per year and smuggling of contraband sugar to Kenya for sales (Aroge, 2021:17).

Though based in Somalia, the operational attacks on businesses by Al-Shabaab cover Somalia, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique and Ethiopia, thus disrupting regional business activities (AU, 2021:6). These countries are being attacked for contributing troops to the United Nations-backed African Union Peacekeeping Force in Somalia (UNISOM), which was established to support the UN-backed central government in Somalia. For instance, Ugandan markets, among other public places, were attacked for having the largest contingent of more than 6,000 troops. The bombing of hotels, which represent another business attraction in Mogadishu, has also undermined tourism business in the country (Aroge, 2021:15). In 2019, for instance, the Mogadishu international cattle market, an international hub of livestock trade with customers coming from Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya and Djibouti, was attacked, killing at least 100 people and over 200 cattle (Aroge, 2021:8). Though still in operation, the market currently operates below its trading capacity; only 18–22 trucks of cattle, as against 130 per day previously, currently offload cattle in the Mogadishu main market (Aroge, 2021:14). Also, due to the

Al-Shabaab crisis, the once-thriving trade between Somalia and Kenya has dropped by two-thirds, thus abruptly halting the annual 2 billion dollars in cross-border business and tourism between the two countries. What the above conflict profile suggests is that the AfCFTA project will likely face a series of challenges in many East African countries due to the persisting conflicts.

In North Africa, the European Union (EU) has long been a leading trade partner to Tunisia. Bilateral trade increased sharply after Tunisia and the EU signed an Association Agreement in 1995 aimed at creating a free trade area for goods, excluding agricultural and fishery products. Between 2013 and 2017, four EU countries, including France, Italy, Germany and Spain, received 60 percent of Tunisia's exports (European Union, 2020). The main exports of the country include textiles, machinery, transport equipment and extractives. However, the 2011 outbreak of political conflict in Tunisia and in the region put the Tunisian economy under pressure, leading to high unemployment, particularly among young graduates. The Tunisian weak business scenario is being compounded by the effects of the ongoing conflict in neighbouring Libya, which was Tunisia's second biggest trade partner prior to 2011 (Malley, 2020:5). In South Africa, the xenophobic attacks on businesses in the country have continued to undermine trade and investment in the sub-region. The attacks involve looting and burning of businesses, leading to job loss and business collapse. Many African migrant entrepreneurs have relocated their businesses abroad (Malley, 2020:2).

From the above analysis, the negative effects of conflicts on the African markets as shown from the narratives from different sub-regions cannot be overemphasised, portending a bad omen for the proper take-off of AfCFTA and its core mandates. It is largely envisaged that the perennial conflicts, which have not been effectively managed despite the AU-EU partnership on peace and security, will likely lead to the collapse of many more businesses under AfCFTA, and the number of unemployed youth and women will grow while citizens' real incomes may virtually collapse under the project. The inability of the African states to meet their statutory obligation of optimal employment generation for unemployed youth could spark off new conflict or exacerbate existing conflict due to unresolved grievances. These conflicts will adversely affect the markets, leading, among other negative consequences, to the destruction of market facilities designed to aid the success of the AfCFTA project.

Conclusion

This chapter explored the implications of the pervasive intra-state conflicts in some African countries for the success of AfCFTA. Drawing on the business security theory, the chapter considers how the AU-EU peace and security partnership has been able to mitigate these African conflicts with a view to enhancing the successful launch and implementation of AfCFTA. It demonstrates that the daunting and protracted conflicts in some African states

and the constraints to the efforts of the AU–EU partnership on peace and security to deal effectively with these conflicts and mitigate the threat they pose to the business environment will undermine the capacity of AfCFTA to achieve its laudable objectives, including the quest for gender equality through women’s empowerment. These negative effects revolve around the fact that conflict-induced insecurity would hinder the free flow of inter-state and border businesses among the AfCFTA-participating countries, while a relatively peaceful country would benefit from trade diversion from its conflict-ridden neighbours.

This chapter postulates that AfCFTA might not be able to achieve much of its mandates in a conflict-ridden African environment. Interestingly, the likelihood of some of the far less conflict-laden countries, including Lesotho and Morocco, benefitting from the huge investment under AfCFTA is not ruled out. Moreover, while conflict has largely degraded legitimate trade, the tendency is there to promote illegitimate trade under AfCFTA, including the proliferation of arms and ammunition, piracy and illegal mining for marketing. Thus the assertion of this study corroborates Mutunga’s (2017) postulation that conflict often re-distributes socio-economic gains in favour of the peaceful market environment and enthrones illegal trade as separatist war lords in Africa often cordon off their area of influence from state authorities while also opening up the same for illegal trading activities. For instance, the Yoruba Nation agitators in Nigeria opened some parts of the Western Nigerian border for smuggling activities. Some of the smuggled items include parboiled rice, arms and ammunition, frozen poultry products, Indian hemp, vegetable oil, second-hand clothing, used cars, used motor tyres, raw wood, soap, used shoes, heroin and cocaine. It is likely that AfCFTA would have to contend with the challenges of illegal importation, which could flood its market with sub-standard goods and unhygienic products.

Thus, the pervasive conflicts in African states, if not well managed, pose an existential threat to the successful launch and implementation of AfCFTA. Without sustained international and regional efforts to frontally tackle African intra-state conflicts and address the gaps in the AU–EU partnership on peace and security, many of the envisioned objectives of the AfCFTA in terms of African businesses and trade and women’s empowerment would remain unattainable.

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