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**Master Thesis**

**African Early Warning Systems:  
Challenges and Prospects for African Security Integration**



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## List of Abbreviations

ACSRT	African Centre for the Study and Research of Terrorism
FOMAC	African Multinational Force
APSA	African Peace and Security Architecture
APF	African Peace Fund
ASF	African Standby Force
AU	African Union
AMU	Arab Maghreb Union
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
COMWARN	COMESA Conflict Early Warning System
CISSA	Committee of Intelligence and Security Services
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CEN-SAD	Community of Sahel–Saharan States
CEWARN	Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism
CEWRU	Conflict Early Warning and Response Unit
CEWS	Continental Early Warning System
CTEWS	Continental Terrorism Early Warning System
DISS	Directorate of Intelligence and Security Services
EACWARN	EAC Early Warning Mechanism
ECOWARN	ECOWAS Early Warning and Response Network
EWS	Early Warning Systems
EAC	East African Community
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ECOMOG	ECOWAS Monitoring Group
EU	European Union
EU APF	European Union African Peace Facility
GIS	General Intelligence Service
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
MSC	Mediation and Security Council
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NEWS	National Early Warning Systems
NIA	National Intelligence Agency
NISS	National Intelligence and Security Service
NRI	National Research Institute
NSS	National Security Service

OAU	Organisation of African Unity
PoW	Panel of Wise
PSC	Peace and Security Council
PSC Protocol	Protocol on the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council
REWC	Regional Early Warning Centre
REWS	Regional Early Warning Systems
REC	Regional Economic Community
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SIS	State Intelligence Service
UN	United Nations
WANEP	West Africa Network for Peacebuilding

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## Introduction

Security threats have long since ceased to be geographically isolated but instead have a supra-regional impact. One of the continent that suffers the more from crises of various dimensions is Africa, reflecting the numerous security challenges the continent is permanently confronting. Failed states, coups d'état or the struggle for resources are ever-present destabilisers. The excessive use of force against the civilian population during unrests or through extremist groups, regime changes such as in Mali, permanent state dysfunctions as the one in Somalia, acts of piracy or humanitarian crises provoked international engagement to contain conflicts.

This raises the question of how to tackle regional specific threats. To face such a variety of security challenges to regional stability, the *African Union* (AU) pursues to strengthen continental security integration. They aim to do so by organising a joint security governance in order to achieve peace, security and prosperity. In this context, the AU designed the comprehensive *African Peace and Security Architecture* (APSA) with its sub-regional organisation, the *Regional Economic Communities* (RECs). Within the APSA a wide range of actors, including RECs and their institutions, armed forces and law enforcement, tackle security problems collaboratively. As in this case too, data and information is the basis of every political decision and of particular importance for supra-national decision making. Therefore, joint *Early Warning Systems* (EWS), Africa's information and intelligence hubs, were established to gather and analyse conflict-related data. The complexity of the APSA and RECs as providers of governance reflects the need for an in-depth examination of their relationship in light of the challenging security environment in Africa.

Drawing upon theoretical approaches this thesis demonstrates that Africa's security integration can be enhanced more effectively when political actors develop more coherent Early Warning Systems. To validate this assessment, the project delineates the characteristics of African Early Warning settings on the basis of theoretical security governance and security complex frameworks and proceeds to empirically test its claims on a comparative case-study basis. For this purpose, the relationships between the African Union's *Continental Early Warning System* (CEWS) and its *Regional Early Warning Systems* (REWS), belonging to the RECs, are selected as case studies to test this research's theoretical suppositions. Scholarly works, policy reviews and assessments provide the evidence required for an accurate

examination of EWS on continental and regional levels.

To analyse the conceptual approach in the APSA, this project proceeds to re-evaluate the current configuration and relationships of African early warning and security institutions by building upon the conceptual framework that Buzan and Waever call the Regional Security Complex Theory. Among others, Buzan and Waever argue that a set of interlinked units such as states and institutions analyse security threats together and pose regional security complexes. The theory is complemented by the security governance approach, which provides a concept to the joint management of security challenges. Security governance represents both, a theoretical concept to counter challenges collectively as well as the practical implementation and enforcement. Hence, the security governance concept and regional Security Complex Theory provide a comprehensive theoretical framework of exploring Africa security institutions and early warning components.

This thesis aims to bridge the gaps in the relevant literature and investigates the ways African early warning institutions constitute challenges or prospects to security integration efforts. This paper investigates three research questions addressing three thematic sections. The continental level evaluates how integration is affected through various African early warning institutions. The regional level analyses how early warning institutions' methodologies influence integration efforts. Lastly, the national level elaborates why African national intelligence and security sectors are determined by authoritarian governance. In order to answer these research questions, this thesis is divided into three levels of analysis. The first level is the continental perspective. Here, the CEWS' institutional struggle with its REWS and other organisations within and beyond the APSA will be analysed. The second level considers the regional aspects. Here, the concepts and methodologies behind the REWS will be examined for common features and differences. As the third and final level of analysis, the examination of AU- member states' internal security sectors will expose national dynamics and trends.

The remainder of this research project proceeds as follows. The first section outlines the theoretical framework. The second section contextualises characteristics of corresponding early warning institutions. The third section analyses and compares REWS methodologies and outlines its potential for regional integration. The fourth section elaborates on national dynamics of domestic security sectors. Finally, this project concludes by arguing that constant

competition among regional actors as well as REWS' diverse methodologies hinder integration efforts. However, giving the variety of regional organisations, individual REWS also contribute to regional integration.

For reasons of better legibility, the acronyms are reintroduced in each chapter.

## **Theoretical Framework**

The regional security governance framework and security complex theory will set the theoretical foundation to explore the African security architecture. Limited capabilities and resources of individual states, to cope with security threats, testify that the Westphalian principle of world order is not a suitable basis for resolving common challenges. In order to overcome the dilemma of nation-state political self-determination and efficiently counter security threats, a common security governance in international affairs had to be established. Security governance describes the processes of a political body to solve a collective problem. Similarly, national security, as the core competence of the Westphalian states, has been transformed into a multidimensional, comprehensive set of issues, weakening the traditional notion of security (Spierling 2014). Withdrawing from a realist state-centred perspective, the theoretical understanding of security and proliferation of security threats make cooperation indispensable. In accordance to that, Mark Webber (2002) defines security governance as “an international system of rule, dependent on the acceptance of a majority of states that are affected, which, through regulatory mechanisms (both formal and informal), governs activities across a range of security and security-related issue areas“ (Webber 2002:44).

However, Webber's global representation of security governance is insufficient as it does not adequately capture regional dynamics. Therefore, Buzan and Waever (2003) suggest to segment the international system into several discrete systems of regional security complexes. By doing so, they build on the security governance approach and establish the Security Complex Theory, which views the world as regional clusters. Buzan (1983) defines a security complex as “a group of states whose primary security concerns link together sufficiently closely that their national securities cannot reasonably be considered apart from each other“ (Buzan 1983:106). Thus, he offers an approach to conceptualise security governance in regional specific dynamics. Arguing that “the regional level of security has become both more autonomous and more prominent in international politics” (Buzan & Waever 2003: 3) they link regional integration inseparably to security governance. Similarly,

Kirchner and Dominguez (2011) observed that regional organisations have taken on prominent roles as security governance providers as the proliferation of insecurity has called for a wide range of differentiated regional responses. The later revised definition of the Security Complex Theory moves away from the limitation to the state as an actor: “A security complex is defined as a set of units whose major processes of securitisation, desecuritisation, or both are so interlinked that their security problems cannot reasonably be analysed or resolved apart from one another“ (Buzan 2003:141). Although Buzan and Waever's theory focuses on multi-actor security complexes, they do not disregard the nation state. As nation states are still central actors within the international system they determine national security dynamics. For this reason, Buzan and Waever (2003) recommend to categorise nation-state according to their degree of their socio-political cohesion in order to analyse the polarity and power relations within a security complexes

The institutionalisation of security allows the practical application of the security governance concept and the Security Complex Theory in Africa. Through the establishment of African security institutions, security dynamics converged and merged into common security structures at continental and regional level. To tackle common security threats, the AU and its RECs established the *African Peace and Security Architecture* (APSA) including the *Continental Early Warning Systems* (CEWS) to gather and analyse conflict-related data and direct policies. In addition to the CEWS, *Regional Economic Communities* (RECs) established *Regional Early Warning Systems* (REWS) within the framework of the APSA. Hence, Buzan and Waever's concept opened the way to describe the African Union and its RECs as (sub-)regional security complexes.

*Early Warning Systems* (EWS) involve various methodologies including a broad spectrum of thematic issues. Ngendo-Tshimba argues that “the notion of an early warning system is generically referred to as to mean any initiative that focuses on systematic data collection, analysis and/or formulation of recommendations, including risk assessment and information sharing” (Ngendo-Tshimba 2014:1). Gurr (1996) adds that early warning requires real-time conflict assessment for immediate response, while Rupesinghe and Kuroda (1992) note that long-term data gathering and analysis is equally important to track security dynamics for timely alert of emerging conflicts. Therefore, EWS essentially consist of information systems to forecast the emergence of potential disputes. Theoretically, EWS can address a variety of thematic priorities ranging from traditional to human-centric security

understanding. Traditional security understanding focuses on the state as the object of reference. Security therefore refers primarily to the state's territory as, traditionally, security has been perceived as a military threat to the state, government or ruling elite, and implied the loss of political self-determination (Daase 2010).

However, the restriction to state-centric security understanding, becomes problematic when several states join institutions to consolidate their security through alliances. When first the *Organisation of African Unity* (OAU), then the AU its RECs established joint EWS, security communities emerged that were less concerned with a state-centric security vision. Subsequently, the traditional understanding of security in EWS has been superseded by the human-centric approach. The human-centric perspective, understands all individuals to be central reference objects of security in order to give more weight to their protection. The human component in EWS has been emphasised to address the broad spectrum of internal and external risks collectively (Daase 2010). Hence, Cilliers (2008) and Ngendo-Tshimba (2014) argue that the aim of joint Early Warning Systems involve consistent and systematised ways of data gathering and analysis, inter alia, from political, military, economical, cultural and religious disciplines in order to strengthen the capacity of decision making.

The thematic proximity of early warning and security issues raises the question of differences and similarities between the EWS and intelligence. As argued above, EWS draw upon transparency, collaboration, cooperation and information sharing in a decentralised system of stakeholders (Cilliers 2005). In contrast to that, traditional intelligence served primary national interests, focusing on state security and regime survival. Therefore, intelligence is characterised by unique features such as secrecy, classified information, sophisticated surveillance technology and clandestine operations. Consequently, intelligence services consist of a rather centralised and closed system of actors to safeguard the integrity of its characteristics (Boshoff 2008).

However, intelligence agencies and EWS also share numerous similarities. As both concepts gather and analyse conflict-related data they need to provide, “timely, accurate, valid, reliable and verifiable information” (Cilliers 2005:1). The purpose of EWS is to formulate strategic options to support political decision-making. Similarly, intelligence communities feed decision-making processes with information. Furthermore, as the understanding of security changed from traditional- to human- centric it influenced

intelligence services. In most countries intelligence service's objectives incorporate a broad spectrum of security threats, similar to the EWS. Accordingly, Hutton (2010) states that the division "between conflict early warning systems and intelligence has become narrower, as it becomes increasingly difficult to isolate what is of interest to intelligence and what should be the focus of early warning" (Hutton 2010:30).

In summary, this paper aims to provide an up-to-date analysis of the African security architecture based on the Regional Security Complexes Theory and security governance concept in the context of Early Warning Systems. The identification of critical developments beyond a state-centric perspective facilitates the design of coherent and joint response strategies as well as security governance to strengthen the integration into a security complex. The broad theoretical ground offers an investigation of the African Union's, its member states', and RECs' relationships and explores hardships of early warning cooperation pointing out challenges and prospects for African security integration.

## Literature Review

The following literature review summarises the most important sources used for the studies' theoretical foundation as well as sources for the analysis of African Early Warning Systems and national intelligence and security governance.

*The Handbook of Governance and Security* edited by James Sperling (2014) examines the evolution of security governance deriving from past theoretical orientations into a modern concept. By bringing together contributions of leading experts Sperling pushes the security governance analyses into new dimensions. Thus, the handbook encourages a further practical application of the concept and is rightly referred to as a standard reference for scholars of security studies.

Emil Joseph Kircher and Roberto Dominguez' (2011) comparative study *The Security Governance of Regional Organisations* assesses the security governance capacity of regional organisations, inter alia the *African Union (AU)*. The study further elaborates on the characteristics, strengths and weaknesses of regional organisations and provides insights into Africa's regional security dynamics.

Gavin Cawthra (2009) study *African Security Governance: Emerging Issues* focuses on challenges of regional specific dynamics in particularly the relationship between

development and security. Assessing several case studies of African security governance transition processes Cawthra argues that transformation to democratic governance depends on historical and social contexts. She further argues that that national reforms are a precondition for successful integration at supra-national levels.

Sandy Africa and Johnny Kwadjo (2009) conducted similar case studies on more African countries and approved Cawthras findings in *Changing Intelligence Dynamics in Africa*. They observed that countries have gone through reform processes ultimately resulting in a positive development towards more democratic intelligence governance. Kwadjo and Africa argue that supra-regional regulations are required to spur democratic transition processes.

In contrast to the underlying theoretical concepts, few scholarly literature addresses African *Early Warning Systems* (EWS). Cilliers (2005, 2008) elaborates on the development and implementation of the African *Continental Early Warning System* (CEWS) and outlines its essential characteristics. Lawrence E. Cline (2016) briefly examines pan-African and sub-regional intelligence and early warning cooperation in his article *African Regional Intelligence Cooperation: Problems and Prospects*. Cline identifies eight regional economic communities with varying degrees of information exchange mechanisms. Furthermore, parallels are drawn between the efficiency of structures and cooperation with external partners and funding. The small amount of literature concerning African Early Warning Systems, demonstrates the urgency of a scientific examination of the issue.

## **Continental Level**

### **African Peace and Security Architecture**

With the transformation of the *Organisation of African Unity* (OAU) into the *African Union* (AU) the *Protocol on the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council* (PSC Protocol) became active. The PSC Protocol endowed the AU with the comprehensive *African Peace and Security Architecture* (APSA) and was adopted from the OAU's equivalent at the first ordinary meeting of AU heads of state and government in South Africa in 2002. The linchpin of the APSA is the *Peace and Security Council* (PSC), which was entrusted with the

task of coordinating peace-building activities on the African continent and became operational in 2004. Additionally, four pillars support the PSC: The *African Standby Force* (ASF), the *Panel of Wise* (PoW), the *African Peace Fund* (APF), and the *Continental Early Warning System* (CEWS) as the information and intelligence hub of the APSA. Similarly, eight sub-regional organisations of the African Union, the *Regional Economic Communities* (RECs), are also integral parts of the APSA.

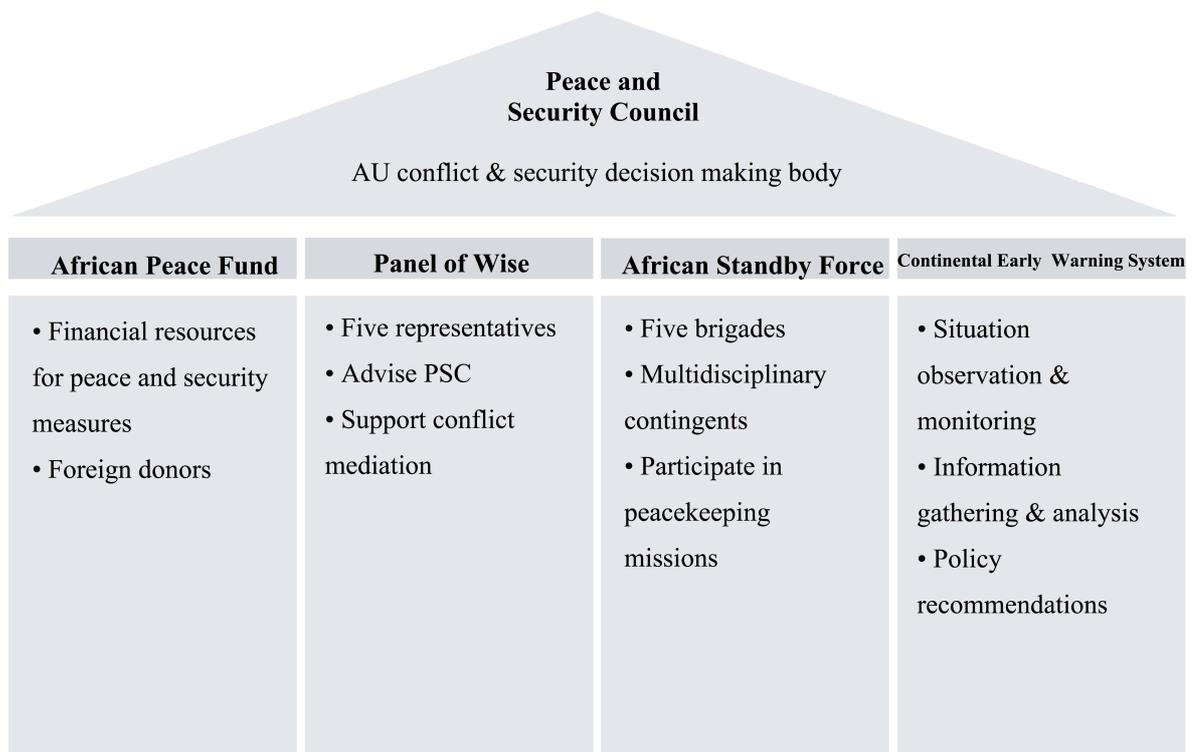


Figure 1: The African Peace and Security Architecture

### **Peace and Security Council**

According to Article 2 of the PSC Protocol, the PSC is a “standing decision-making organ for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts“ that acts as a “collective security and early warning arrangement“ to facilitate “timely and effective response to conflict and crisis situations in Africa”. The PSC's mandate under Article 7 includes, but is not limited to, the following tasks:

- Early detection and prevention of violent clashes and conflicts and policies that could lead to genocide and crimes against humanity

- Performing peace-building and peacemaking tasks to address conflicts where they have arisen
- Authorising the planning and implementation of peace-building operations
- Making recommendations to the Assembly for intervention in a Member State and supporting and promoting humanitarian action in the event of armed conflict or major nature disasters
- Coordinate and harmonise efforts to combat terrorism through continental and regional instruments to achieve the peace and security agenda objectives the PSC Protocol draws on the competencies of its supporting elements.

### **The African Standby Force and Regional Economic Communities**

The first of these is the *African Standby Force* responsible for the establishing of a rapid military response capability. As depicted in figure 1, the ASF consists of five brigades from each African region. Each standby-brigade has a personnel strength of 5,000 troops (including four infantry battalions). In total, the ASF has 20,000 to 25,000 security personnel, primarily military, supplemented by police and civilians for multidisciplinary operations. Depending on the operational scenario, AFS contingents are to be deployed in 14 to 30 days. The brigades cover a range of mission scenarios such as political observer missions or military intervention (AU 2003).

As the African Union is closely linked to its regional organisations the establishment of the ASF is coordinated through Regional Economic Communities, however, due to overlapping memberships in the regional organisations the composition and management of the brigades does not necessarily correspond to the RECs. As in the APSA designed, the South-Brigade is the Standby Force of the *Southern African Development Community* (SADC). The Central-Brigade is the Standby Force of the *Economic Community of Central African States* (ECCAS). The West-Brigade is the Standby Force of the *Economic Community of West African States* (ECOWAS). The East-Brigade is Standby Force of the *East African Communities* (EAC).

In response to mentioned overlap, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Peace and Security Cooperation between the AU and RECs was adopted in January 2008, defining

the modalities of coordination and communication on the operationalisation of APSA along with all RECs. The ASF brigades became operational in 2015, however, the status of readiness differs between the regions and brigades (Leijenaar & Lotze 2015).

Further strengthening security architecture, the APSA established a Military Committee and Regional Mechanisms for conflict prevention, management, and resolution as supporting components to advise the PSC on operational and security requirements. The Military Committee includes senior military officers from PSC member states who are tasked with advising and assisting the PSC on all military and security matters.

### **African Peace Fund and the EU Peace Facility**

As a second supporting element, the *African Peace Fund* (APF), constitutes the financial pillar of the APSA to provide the necessary resources for peace and security operations and other peacekeeping activities. Contributions to the fund are made by the AU's regular budget (contributions from AU member states). Overall, the African Union member states contribute 78 million EUR per year to their APF (AU 2020a). Due to the weak financial situation of many African states most nations are behind their payments. Therefore, major contributions are made by other sources including the private sector, individuals, and the international community. For its part, the European Union founded a facility. As a main actor, the European Union's *African Peace Facility* (APF) was established in 2004 to strengthen the APSA and its institutions, such as Regional Economic Communities and their Regional Early Warning Systems, through targeted financial support. Close to 800 million EUR have been donated in 2019 (2017: 584 Million EUR) by the EU APF in the areas of conflict prevention, management and resolution, and peace-building activities. Additionally, the Czech Republic and Luxembourg have made voluntary financial contributions (EU 2020). Although member states are striving to fulfil their commitment to feed the fund, it remains a challenge to obtain contributions. The dependence on external funding remains problematic as it causes political challenges and power struggles between various actors and AU security institutions, which will be further discussed in this chapter.

## Panel of Wise

The third supporting element is the *Panel of Wise* (PoW), established under Article 11 of the PSC Protocol. The PoW advises the PSC and the Chairperson of the Commission, particularly on matters related to the promotion and maintenance of peace, security, and stability in Africa. They recommend appropriate measures to support the efforts of AU's security institutions to prevent conflicts. The PoW consists of five representatives, one from each (East-, South-, West-, North-, Central-) African region.

## Continental Early Warning System

The fourth and final supporting element of the APSA, the *Continental Early Warning System* (CEWS) is an organisation for collecting and analysing data to detect and prevent conflicts at an early stage. The system consists on an observation and monitoring centre located at the AU in Addis Ababa and known as the *Situation Room*, as well as regional mechanism observation and monitoring units.

The CEWS gathers information on potential and ongoing conflicts and threats to peace and security in Africa. The CEWS provides this information to the AU decision making bodies, in particular to the PSC, together with recommendations on possible course of action. Receiving reports from operational staff on a daily basis, the CEWS collaborates with field missions, liaison offices, national intelligence agencies and the REC's *Regional Early Warning Systems* (REWS). The organisation's data collection and analysis officers continuously monitors the situation through its Situation Room, producing a range of reports, for instance, early warning and flash reports, or weekly updates (Gardachew 2020).

Over the past two decades, these four elements supporting the PSC are continuing to strive towards strengthening inter-agency cooperation for structural response to security dynamics in Africa.

Africa's *Early Warning System* (EWS) operationalisation was limited due to Organisation of African Unity, the AU's predecessor organisation, original creed of non-interference and sovereignty of its member states, resulting in continental security dynamics having been addressed insufficiently ever since. The OAU decided to establish an Early

Warning System already in 1992, wherefore the member states met annually in order to discuss security related issues. Following these events, the ratified Yaoundé Declaration constitutes the mechanism with the prevention of armed conflicts as well as the implementation of peacemaking and peace-building measures before, during and after conflicts (Cilliers 2005):

“We welcome the creation in June 1993 of the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution which is already contributing significantly towards improving the Organization’s capacity to prevent conflicts and maintain peace in Africa; - We hail in advance the imminent institution within the said Mechanism of our early warning system (EWS) on conflict situations in Africa, convinced that its establishment should be able to further improve the action of the Organization in the area of preventive diplomacy by making it possible, notably through pre-emptive action in gathering and analyzing pertinent data, not only to establish the existence of a threat to the peace, but also to look for a quick way to remove the threat. We exhort all potential data collectors to communicate same information in time and provide the OAU Mechanism regularly with any at their disposal on warning signs of imminent conflict.”

While the inauguration speech emphasises the pre-emptive early warning character, particularly the importance of conflict-related information gathering and analysis, the Declaration also bound the mechanisms to the restrictive principles of the OAU:

“The Mechanism [on Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution] will be guided by the objectives and principles of the OAU Charter; in particular, the sovereign equality of Member States, non-interference in the internal affairs of States, the respect of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Member States, their inalienable right to independent existence, the peaceful settlement of disputes as well as the inviolability of borders inherited from colonialism. It will also function on the basis of the consent and the co-operation of the parties to a conflict.”

Cilliers (2005) states that the declaration constraints the EWS to meet outlined objectives, in particular preventive measures, as the OAU charter codified non-interference policy and national sovereignty to its member states. Such principles complicated the

operationalisation of the EWS difficult, as they required intergovernmental cooperation, which includes sharing sensitive data. Following the end of the Cold War and the bipolar world order, African states faced increasing domestic instability, which accelerated political fragmentation. Consequently, the EWS was hardly effective against the numerous conflicts that emerged in Africa (Cilliers 2005) .

Even though efforts have been made to increase the EWS' efficiency, there still remained a great need for refinement. In response to the Rwanda genocide and crises in Somalia the EWS was expanded already in 1994. In addition to a situation room, a library and documentation centre, personal strength increased as field operations unit were deployed in conflict areas. Despite such efforts to increase the EWS efficiency, the OAU report from 1999 critically summarised that “more than five years after the adoption of the Declaration establishing the Mechanism, the Central Organ still lacks adequate information to effectively predict, plan for, prevent and manage the complex and numerous conflicts that have plagued the region. It also lacks the capacity for in-depth analysis of strategic options on which to base its decisions”. The report identified the lack of formalised information processing, along with gathering, analysis, dissemination and presentation of policy options processes as a key issues. However, those rhetorical efforts to overcome the capability gap could not be translated into more adequate tools wherefore the EWS remained as inefficient as ever (Noyes & Yarwood 2013).

As the Organisation of African Unity transformed into the African Union, the AU inherited a non-operational and chronicle underfunded EWS. Therefore, the AU Peace and Security Protocol formally re-established the OAU's EWS as the *Continental Early Warning System*. Learning from the OAU's mistakes the CEWS systematically reviewed and answered capability gaps with a defined step-by-step approach, thus tackling issues related to data gathering, analysing, disseminating and directing of information.

As the first step of the approach information is gathered and monitored through a system of various actors. AU departments such as the Commission and Local Liaisons Offices located in African countries contribute to the gathering process. In addition to that, the PSC mandates AU peacekeeping missions. AU missions currently deployed in Mali, the Central African Republic and Somalia, feed the CEWS with information. Beyond the AU's institutions international organisations, such as the United Nations agencies, think tanks and

academic institutions, *Non-Governmental Institutions* (NGOs), RECs and AU member states contribute to the system as well. As the second step, analysis officers located in the CEWS' situation room process information, conducting long structural, target specific analysis, behavioural analysis concerning specific events and how they develop over time. Several IT-tools support the analysts in this regard. The software tool *Africa Reporter*, for instance, structures and prepares field reports for further analysis, while *Africa Prospects* calculates the vulnerability of areas (Engel 2018). As the third step, several intelligence products are developed for dissemination based on the analysis process. Furthermore, recommendations on policy options are formulated and passed on to decision maker bodies. CEWS' actions range from immediate alert on current conflicts to situation reports, updates or classified policy recommendations. Not only do they alert the stakeholders to possible threats, according to CEWS's vision, they also “advise the Peace and Security Council, on potential conflicts and threats to peace and security in Africa and recommend the best courses of action” (AU 2010:32).

In regard to AU's organs strategical decision making, CEWS analysis includes a wide range of information and analytical branches. Besides traditional security, economical and socio-cultural analysis also contribute to identifying conflict mappings, aggravators, triggers and inhibitors of potential violent conflicts or other security dynamics. As the fourth and final step, the CEWS readjusts their information gathering and analytical procedures based on information consumers feedback and decision makers' needs (Engel 2018).

Another issue of high importance is the coordination between the AU and RECs to function Early Warning Systems. The AU Constitutive Act emphasises the importance of coordination and harmonising policies between Regional Economic Communities and the AU. Therefore, the 2002 PSC Protocol lists specific roles and duties for RECs regarding the implementation of the CEWS. Consequently, RECs became integral part of the continental security framework in 2008. Since then collaboration and integration of RECs and their regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (RMs) in the AU intensified and strengthened to effectively address security issues in Africa. Similar to the CEWS most RECs established Regional Early Warning Systems for their respective territories. The AU harmonises and coordinates the activities of the RECs through the opening of RECs liaison offices based at the headquarters of the AU and AU offices located at headquarters of the RECs. The connection and cooperation of observation and monitoring

units of RECs to CEWS is therefore of high importance for the quality of data collection and analysis on the continental level, and thereby crucial for the effectiveness as an Early Warning System (Nathan 2016).

The collaboration between the CEWS and REWs of the RECs is characterised by increased cooperation efforts, however limited systematic collaboration of data and intelligence sharing limit the CEWS' operability. The AU (2010) stresses that challenges in intelligence and information sharing and data exchange, early warning data collection, and conflict and cooperation analysis remain present and a threat to continental security integration. To fully understand the challenges of continental security integration and information sharing within African institutions we need to go back in time and elaborate on the geopolitical context RECs evolved in. The conflicts in Liberia (1989), Somalia (1990) and the genocide in Rwanda (1993) were a first test for the African states security management. However, the OAU failed to achieve its goal of rationalising, i.e., coordinating and harmonising, security policy action. Similarly, the OAU's creed of non-interference in internal affairs poses an obstacle to the resolution of conflicts, including military ones. Hence, the OAU remained an inefficient organisation of heads of state and government, often sarcastically referred to as the *dictators club*.

Faced with an intensification of the conflicts and their threatened expansion, individual RECs sought to compensate for the OAU's weaknesses through regional initiatives. Consequently, the RECs became independent and detached from the framework originally set by the OAU (Cilliers 2005). OAU's strict interpretation of non-interference in the internal affairs of African states made the organisation incapable to exercise security governance and conflict management leadership. Eventually, security issues remained regional matters and RECs have taken action where the OAU has failed to follow through: In 1989, the *Economic Community of West African States* (ECOWAS) attempted to end the civil war in Liberia by sending a unprecedented peacekeeping force. Only two years later, the West African community intervened in Sierra Leone. At another instance, regional actors engaged in conflicts at the Horn of Africa. The *Intergovernmental Authority on Development* (IGAD) functioned as a mediator between conflict parties and contributed to a peace agreement between Somalia and Ethiopia. Similarly, the *Southern African Development Community* (SADC) intervened in Lesotho in southern Africa during the 90s (Aeby 2021). The OAU critically noted that “member states undertake, through their respective regional economic

communities, to coordinate and harmonise their sub-regional organisations, with a view to rationalising the integration process at the level of each region” (AU 1991: 52), at the expense of continental integration.

Striving to compensate the disintegrative tendencies, the African Union explicitly described RECs as an integral part of the new African Peace and Security Architecture (AU 2002:Art. 16). This raises questions of sovereignty, subordination and assignment between the AU and the RECs. Indeed, during the first implementation phase of the the new APSA, between 2003 to 2006, regular irritations occurred regarding the division of labour between AU and RECs on the one hand, and among RECs on the other, causing delays in operationalising the CEWS. It was not until 2008 that the AU and the RECs agreed on a common ground for cooperation in the *Memorandum of Understanding* (MoU) and the Protocol on Relations between the African Union and the Regional Economic Communities (Engel 2018). According to the MoU RECs and the AU are “called upon to regularly exchange information, analysis and assessments on the issue of peace and security” and “providing appropriate information required on particular aspects objectives, and procedures” (AU 2008:7). The agreements introduced the principle of subsidiarity that guide the AU-RECs relationship. According to Ogunnoiki “subsidiarity is a principle on the allocation and exercise of political and legal authority in multilevel governance arrangements in which at least some competences are shared between different levels of politico–legal decision making” (Ogunnoiki 2018:154). The principle regulates hierarchical authority and power-exercise within a political domain. In the context of the CEWS and African conflict resolution mechanisms this translates to favouring regional actors in taking action as the AU only intervenes when RECs cannot resolve the issue.

However, the practical application of the subsidiarity principle lead to mixed experiences as the principle insufficiently addresses conflicts of interest among RECs and vis-à-vis the AU. Some RECs, for instance, insist on competing interpretations of the principle in accordance with their political interests (Ogunnoiki 2018). The intra-regional power struggle cumulated in a competition of external validation, financial and material support. Consequently, each REC wants to demonstrate their institutional relevance to the international community and increase their political prominence in the region. This could be witnessed in *East African Communities'* (EAC) and IGAD's competition for political recognition at the Horn of Africa. East Africa turned into a political battleground resulting in uncoordinated

engagement of both organisations in security issues. Due to poor intelligence and information sharing, efforts of containing security threats failed and security integration remains unresolved. This indicates the likelihood of REC's institutions posing a stumbling block rather than a security complex as they attempt to enforce peace and security in the region (Bayeh 2020).

The impact of competing RECs can be exemplified when examining the conflict management at the Horn of Africa, which was particularly affected by insufficient sharing of early warning data. East Africa's security situation is challenged by activities of several terrorist and insurgency groups, most prominently al-Shaabab. The radical Islamist movement, originally operating in crisis-ridden Somalia, negatively affected the security situation in the whole region: the attack at the Westgate Premier Shopping Mall in Nairobi in 2013 and the assault on a College in Kenya in 2015 resulted in 214 civilian casualties. Al-Shaabab thus demonstrated the beginning of a transnational terrorist threat that triggered counter-terrorism measures by competing RECs at the Horn of Africa.

There are two in East Africa RECs involved in the conflict, the IGAD and the EAC. On one hand IGAD has sophisticated peace and security mechanisms focusing on conflict prevention. In detail, it consists of specialised institutions, such as the *Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism* (CEWARN), IGAD's REWS, and the Security Sector Program. IGAD's mandate includes intelligence and police networking seeking to facilitate the dissemination of information and operational collaboration. IGAD improved its regional political role as the organisation mediated between the conflicting parties of Somalia and Ethiopia, and contributed to a peace agreement that ended their hostilities in 1988. Consequently, IGAD was directly involved in capacity building of the Transitional Government in Somalia, strengthening the country's stability. EAC, on the other hand, has also established several instruments on peace and security by establishing their own REWS (EACWARN) within the *Regional Framework for Conflict Prevention Management and Resolution*. Regular meetings on cooperative interstate security and regional security policy coordination are held to exchange vital intelligence on counterterrorist operations, current or future conflicts and threats. Similarly, EAC's peace and security framework has identified objectives for strengthening regional security by combating terrorism collaboratively and limiting transnational and cross-border crimes.

IGAD's and EAC's overlapping mandates, structures and objectives resulted in a competition for regional dominance, which limited the possibilities for establishing a principal organisation of security cooperation. One instance illustrating the problematic nature of this relationship, is the need of an additional coordination in order to administer East Africa's incorporation into the African Standby Force. Amongst other things resulting from EAC's and IGAD's institutional disagreements, the lack of military coordination and action mitigated the effectiveness of counterterrorism efforts to fight al-Shabaab. The situation complicated as al-Shaabaab adopted a broader regional strategy after pledging obedience to the *Islamic State* (IS) and intensifying transnational terrorist attacks. Consequently, counterterrorism efforts at the Horn of Africa remained largely insufficient. Crucial information in the fight against al-Shaabaab was withheld in order to secure a political advantage for the respective REC. Scholars identified capacity shortcomings in intelligence gathering and sharing as having significantly limited the effectiveness of regional initiatives (Finlay et al. 2011). Galadima and Ogbonnaya summarise that “the struggle for superiority and regional dominance between IGAD and the EAC has negatively affected the emergence of a regionally coordinated strategy for dealing with security and development challenges in the region” (Galadima & Ogbonnaya 2018:3).

An initiative by the heads of intelligence and security services of EAC and IGAD member states seek to compensate the weaknesses of the institutional competition to effectively address East Africa's security challenges. They launched a Regional Fusion and Liaison Unit in Uganda in 2018 to strengthen a joint intelligence and coordinate counterterrorism operations. Whether the animosity and competition between the regional organisations and member states will allow the Fusion Centre to serve its purpose is uncertain. The concern of bifunctional institutions and duplicated efforts in the region among the two organisations remains, regardless of the intelligence-initiative (Bayeh 2020).

Cooperation between AU and RECs encounters another obstacle namely the institutional imitation effect in political, military, and diplomatic structures. Due to OAU's inefficiency in conflict prevention, the RECs, for their part, developed their own instruments and programs. With their own political agenda in mind RECs addressed security issues without sufficient coordinating with the OAU/AU. ECOWAS, for instance, promoted sub-regional security through supra-national institutionalisation of security issues. Their *Monitoring Group* (ECOMOG), was formed in 1990, to help resolve conflicts in ECOWAS

member states such as Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau. Subsequently, ECOWAS adopted the OAU's *Protocol on the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping, and Security* in 1999. The protocol established the *Mediation and Security Council* (MSC), ECOWAS' equivalent to the AU *Peace and Security Council* (PSC). The MSC authorised military interventions and established a vision, mandate and governance for conducting complex and multi-dimensional peace operations within West Africa (Arthur 2017).

Other RECs established institutions equivalent to the AU security architecture in much the same way. The AU PSC, for instance, is mirrored by the Troika of Heads of State and Government, a SADC institution, and the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa, representing an ECCAS' decision-making body. The imitation effect also applies a number of other AU security institutions, such as the military committee and the Panel of Wise. Giving the overlap of institutions, initiatives and mandates possible cooperation is overshadowed by general political tendencies. Consequently, political actors are alternately rivals or partner depending on the conflicts characteristics and respective political interests of their organisations (Arthur 2017).

This particular problem of conflicting security strategies became evident in the 2013 rebellion in the Central African Republic. While the AU PSC called for the complete isolation of the rebels, ECCAS officially recognised the rebel leader as the head of state for duration of the transition period. Moreover, they ignored the AU's travel ban on the Central African Republic. This “highlights both the autonomy of the RECs and the inherent tension between the principle of subsidiarity and the primacy of the AU’s responsibility for peace and security on the continent” (Nathan 2016:6). The frictions are thus accelerated by the absence of a reliable process for determining a common conflict response policy between the AU PSC and its REC's counterparts. As an AU assessment of the APSA put it: “There appears to be a disconnect between the AU PSC and similar organs in the RECs. This is a crucial gap given that enforcing PSC decisions rests with its members who are also members of the RECs. Thus, without proper coordination, implementing PSC decisions will be significantly diminished, potentially undermining the credibility of the PSC” (AU 2010:8).

As the OAU, and to some extent the AU, are incapable of sufficiently tackling security threats, the RECs evolved into an environment suffering from a power vacuum,

which was consequently filled by RECs security institutions, in particular Regional Early Warning Systems. The AU seeks to overcome disconnections by the standardisation of processes but still lack a joint definition of strategies on sharing early warning information. The problematic absence of common strategies poses a major challenge to information and intelligence cooperation. The practice of overlapping conflict prevention activities, institutions and responsibilities is reflected in the Continental- and Regional Early Warning Systems as they share the same functionalities. Six out of eight RECs established their own REWS: ECOWARN (ECOWAS) in West Africa, MARAC (ECCAS) in Central Africa, EACWARN (EAC) and CEWARN (IGAD) at the Horn of Africa, and finally REWC (SADC) and COMWARN (COMESA) in Southern Africa. Overlapping memberships and general competition of political actors pose the risk of affecting intelligence reports' and policy recommendations' consistency (Gnanguênon 2021).

Similarly, a lack of conceptual agreement on a harmonised approach to information collection and analysis threatens political outcomes. On the one hand some RECs seek to establish a transparent open-source-based approach, while few other RECs, on the other hand, insist on traditional intelligence gathering and analysis. The AU acknowledges that “different approaches would undoubtedly affect the level and most importantly, the kind of information that is shared with the AU and other RECs” (AU 2010:68). This entails a dilemma: As discussed earlier, traditional intelligence is less likely to disseminate intelligence freely as their activities are anchored in national intelligence systems, which are bound to national interests. Opposed to that, those countries favouring open systems will be less inhibited to share intelligence. The broad use of information and reports from conflict-related analysis processes might be prohibited because such reports can not be publicly shared as they hold sensitive data. Additionally, the quality and time may negatively affect decision-making and early response to conflicts, thus threatening the purpose of Africa's Early Warning Systems. Hence, politicisation of EWS remains problematic, particularly in regard to controlling valuable political information in cases of institutional competition and national security. After all, the institutions within the APSA are not only gathering and analysing conflict-related information, but also “constantly competing with their products and outcomes for the AU’s attention and recognition of their relevance” (Engel 2018:125).

As another issue, each REC has their own specific interpretation of EWS. They made varying degrees of progress in implementing their REWS. IGAD's and ECOWAS' REWS are

full operational as they feed the CEWS with data and analysis for AU conflict response strategies. Both North African RECs, the *Arab Maghreb Union* (AMU) and the *Community of Sahel–Saharan States* (CEN-SAD), have not implemented a REWS yet. Other RECs REWS, such as ECCAS' and COMESA's are rather non-operational as they are short on staff and funding. Additionally, different regional approaches regarding the implementation of REWS complicate the harmonisation at the continental level. IGAD's REWS (CEWARN), for instance, operates an open-source information centre while SADC's REWS, is closely interconnected with the intelligence community in the region, making SADC more state-centric. Similarly, Regional Early Warning systems focus on conflicts varies. SADC's intelligence-based REWS, focuses on socio-economic threats, while ECOWARNs human-security centric approach, incorporates a wider range of thematic areas. EACWARN stresses the importance of inter-state security among its member states, collective security and conflicts with regard to natural resources and poverty (Eze & Frimpong 2021).

Among with AU-reports many scholars have criticised the CEWS for its insufficient intelligence coordination and information-sharing with the REWS. The early warning efforts of the RECs within the APSA “are piecemeal, frequently based on uncoordinated ways, and yet to be effectively institutionalised in a systematic manner” (Gardachew 2020:190). However, no matter how technically robust and well funded the CEWS is, the demonstrated lack of political will to overcome obstacles within the APSA is likely to continue. This will constrain its early warning capabilities, responses to conflicts and, moreover, delay the continental security integration (Gardachew 2020). Hence, information and intelligence cooperation is characterised by political obstacles within the institutions of the APSA. The complexity of the institutional landscape of EWS is further aggravated by additional institutions outside the APSA. The following two chapters will introduce and discuss two more early warning components in Africa.

## **African Centre for the Study and Research of Terrorism**

The *African Centre for the Study and Research of Terrorism* (ACSRT) is an institution within the African Union-Commission for implementing, harmonising and coordinating African counterterrorism efforts. It collaborates with the AU, its member states, and the

RECs. The ACSRT's broad mandate includes functions that are closely related to early warning purposes. According to its mandate the ACSRT (AU 2005):

- establishes operating procedures for information gathering, processing and dissemination;
- develops cooperation and assistance programmes with similar and/or interested institutions at national, regional, continental and international levels, in the areas of research, information gathering and analyses on issues relating to the prevention and combating of terrorism;
- develops capacity for early warning to encourage early response;
- undertakes studies and make recommendations on the strengthening and standardisation of legal norms and cooperation in matters of information-sharing among Member States;
- submits annual reports on its activities to the Chairperson of the Commission, for consideration by the policy Organs of the Union.

The ACSRT is divided into three units. The *Training and Equipment Unit* develops workshops and events to advise member states and RECs on enhancing counterterrorism efforts. The *Alert and Prevention Unit* as well as the *Database and Documentation Unit* form the *Continental Terrorism Early Warning System* (CTEWS). This system provides continuous risk assessments and threat analysis on extremism and terrorism in Africa. Furthermore, it evaluates member states' counterterrorism capacities and identifies gaps and needs (Lallali 2021).

## **Committee of Intelligence and Security Services of Africa**

In addition to the CEWS and the ACSRT, the *Committee of Intelligence and Security Services* (CISSA) has been entrusted with similar tasks. The CISSA was established in 2004 to provide continental intelligence governance and strengthen intelligence collaboration. The CISSA consist of three divisions. As the first division, the *CISSA-Conference* consists of the heads of intelligence services, and advises the AU-Commission on security issues and intelligence. The second division, the *Panel of Experts* composed of representative from

CISSA member states, assists the CISSA-Conference. The third division, the secretariat, is staffed with officers from Africa's national intelligence and security services, and located at the AU Headquarter in Addis Ababa for communication with the AU. According to Article 14 of the CISSA Protocol, the secretariat has the responsibility to:

- Submit to the AU Commission Chairperson, through the Intelligence and Security Committee, the decisions and deliberations resulting from the conferences
- Implement the deliberations, follow-up plans, monitor programs, actions, and strategies of the Peace and Security Council of the AU regarding intelligence and security matters
- Promote the standardisation of data and concepts within the AU PSC, pursuant to deliberations of the CISSA
- Collect data and intelligence from organs of intelligence and security services and other institutions of members necessary for the production of studies, forecasts, assessments, and perspectives of the overall situation in the framework of peace and stability monitoring in order to suggest actions necessary to eradicate factors of threat or tension
- Submit to AU intelligence and security organs reports of any situation of any given region under tension or conflict as well as the forecasts and likelihood of settlement
- Develop and host the database of CISSA on all threats on the continent.

CISSA's responsibilities are highlighted by two major points and thus complimented by further informal channels for exchange. First, they emphasise CISSA's role as a platform for communication and sharing sensitive data between intelligence services. This aspect also includes the production of their own early warning products to provide the AU with intelligence. Second, the objectives address the AU decision-making bodies exclusively and underline CISSA's association with the AU. In accordance to that, CISSA's official vision is “to be the primary provider of intelligence to the policymaking organs of the African Union”. Beyond the official objectives and guidelines, CISSA applies informal relationships and communication channels for a more efficient exchange of intelligence. As discussed earlier, the inherent tension between keeping secrecy and collaboration with partners limits the

sharing of intelligence. Some African countries are reluctant to share written intelligence reports on others. Therefore, CISSA does not rely on reports only, but also engages in field visits. In field visits CISSA officials personally interact with member state intelligence officers on critical information not shared through the standardised systems. Consequently, field visits became the most informative practice of intelligence sharing (Hutton 2013).

## **Conclusion: Continental Level**

According to their mandates, the objectives and roles of REWS, CEWS, ACSRT, and CISSA not only share similarities but also differences. Reviewing and comparing the mandates reveals that ACSRT's objectives coincides to a large extent with those of the CEWS's mandate. The ACSRT focuses exclusively on terrorism, yet terrorism is also part of the wide-ranging CEWS. Both organisations maintain databases, collect and analyse information as well as submit policy recommendations to AU institutions. However, there is no clear separation of tasks, as both organisation's mandates demonstrate early warning characteristics mainly through the emphasise of the importance of gathering and analysing information or intelligence. For this purpose, both CEWS and ACSRT have established communication channels such as and liaisons offices in member states at RECs' headquarters, increasing the complexity of early warning bodies. Overall, data collection and analysis as well as the translation into early warning activities is complicated as reflected in multiplied institutional efforts.

From another perspective, CISSA differs from CEWS and ACSRT as it evolved from being an intelligence community into being a transparent organisation. While ACSRT is a scientific research institute that publishes its results and CEWS a rather transparent institution, CISSA adhered to secrecy and non-transparency for a long time and resembles an intelligence community with unique characteristics. However, it is gradually replacing its features. CISSA's plan of action sets out the “operationalisation of an open source early-warning desk, collection and production of all-source intelligence” (Hutton 2013:191) and public engagement. Its new strategy is similar to CEWS' in many regards. Through the collection and production of all source-intelligence, CISSA adopted a broader framework and engaged with civil organisations, academic institutions and experts beyond the intelligence

community. As CISSA includes collaboration with non-governmental entities and pursues a more public vision, it can no longer be viewed as a traditional intelligence community. Also, CEWS seeks to be as transparent as possible while maintaining relations to national intelligence communities. In that way, both organisations follow a mixed methodology of information gathering and analysis (Hutton 2013).

According to article 16 of the CISSA Memorandum, its relationship to the RECs and, consequently, to their REWS is to be managed through regional intelligence bodies. However, neither official documents nor academic work provides any insights or substance as grounds for the cooperation. Similarly, little is known about the CISSA-CEWS collaboration. Maru (2016) argues that, because only little information is available, it indicates that there is a lack of guidelines and institutionalised relationships in the field of early warning in Africa.

The examination of differences and similarities within the African Peace and Security Architecture exposes that CISSA and CEWS were operationalised to fill an information gap in order to strengthen continental decision making. However, CISSA duplicates the role of CEWS as both report to the AU Peace and Security Council on the same security issues. Furthermore, both institutions are designed to gather information on potential or emerging conflicts or threats to peace and security as to provide timely and accurate analysis to continental decision makers. It seems paradox that CISSA runs an open-source early-warning desk located only a few hundred meters from the CEWS headquarter in Addis Ababa. CISSA, however, compensates for CEWS' weaknesses to some extent. This is particularly due to their more personal and informal communication channels such as the field missions. Lastly, CISSA came into being through PSC acts and is closely linked to AU security institutions it is not a formal part of the APSA. Not only does its integrative approach help to mitigate redundant intelligence efforts as well as clarify responsibilities and duties among security institutions. CISSA also plays a minor political role due to its separate structure outside the APSA which ultimately aids decreasing continental competition of security institutions.

To sum up, all three institutions advise the Peace and Security Council and other AU decision maker-bodies on security issues. Early warning is the key feature of the CEWS, however, CISSA too focuses on conflict forecast with early warning character similar to the ACSRT. Moreover, the geographical areas of responsibility overlap as their responsibilities include security trends and dynamics on the entire continent.

## Regional Level

### African Regional Early Warning Systems

Pan-African integration efforts are based on *Regional Economic Communities* (RECs), originally intended to promote sub-regional economic integration only. As security challenges accumulated to a structural threat, African RECs established *Regional Early Warning Systems* (REWS) which became an essential pillar for African security integration. However, the differences between the REWS constitute a barrier to security integration.

The 1980 Lagos Plan of Action for African Development and the Abuja Treaty were the first to recommend the establishment of RECs as the foundation for African integration. The *Organisation of African Unity's* (OAU) underlying assumption was that free trade areas and customs unions are crucial to Africa's future as larger markets would create significant welfare effects. Therefore, individual countries merged to form subregions and founded RECs to achieve economic integration. On this basis, the OAU envisaged the gradual integration of the RECs into a continental economic community (AU 2021).

However, political unrest within African countries, due to civil wars and coups, undermined the progress of regional institutions. Soon, the security situation emerged as a major challenge for the African integration. Consequently, RECs included peace and security into their political agendas to cope with threats. RECs were not, however, originally designed to function as security actors since their mandates and original responsibilities were purely economic in nature. Mandates, for instance, covered the economic cooperation among its member states through the promotion of trade and economic development. Hence, regional security institutions had to be established to tackle regional security threats. The central organ of the newly formed security architectures were information and intelligence hubs, the so-called Regional Early Warning Systems. REWS function as an information and analysis tool, through which RECs policymakers can quickly respond to emerging conflicts and deploy appropriate conflict mitigation tools (Gnanguênon 2020, Cilliers 2005).

RECs and their REWS as such are embedded in the *African Peace and Security Architecture* (APSA). The APSA was launched in 2002 by the *African Union* (AU) and intended as a long-term structural response to peace and security challenges on the African continent. Within the APSA, RECs are to make their REWS as well as other security bodies

for the management and resolution of conflicts available to the AU in order to promote the continental integration process (Ngendo-Tshimba 2015). Following this concept, the African Union has recognised eight RECs as components of continental integration. With the exception of the *Community of Sahel-Saharan States* (CEN-SAD) and the *Union du Maghreb Arabe* (UMA) in North Africa, each REC developed a REWS:

- The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) established the COMESA Conflict Early Warning System (COMWARN).
- The East African Community (EAC) established the EAC Early Warning Mechanism (EACWARN).
- The Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) established the Central African Early Warning System (MARAC).
- The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) established the Early Warning and Response Network (ECOWARN).
- The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) established the Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN).
- The Southern African Development Community (SADC) established the Regional Early Warning Centre (REWC).

Current Early Warning Systems are not new instruments per se but have evolved from two previous generations. The first generation came into existence in the 1950s. Strategic intelligence predicted traditional state-centric security threats to regimes such as military attacks during the colonial era. The second generation focused on humanitarian crises and human-centric security in Africa, such as famines and droughts. The current third generation EWS includes the gathering and analysis of a wide range of information on many thematic areas. The spectrum is comprised of, for instance, terrorism, cross-border crime, inter-ethnic tensions and human rights (Ngendo-Tshimba 2015).

The following section describes the individual REWS' structure and operationalisation to highlight differences in order to analyse the REWS potential for African security integration. The differences among the REWS of the third generation, as well as their

individual development and methodologies, pose a challenge to regional security integration. The AU's attempts to coordinate the integration-processes has but has limited influence as RECs enjoy a high degree of political autonomy. Irrespective of their differences REWS' do share a common core concept, which needs to be outlined first. REWS' process is guided by four stages: collection, process and analysis, dissemination, and direction.

1. *Collection:* Raw data and information is gathered based on the methodological parameters.
2. *Process and analysis:* obtained information and data are evaluated, structured, interpreted and stored electronically in databases. After the analysis, policy recommendations and reports are prepared.
3. *Dissemination:* Handover of results to the political decision-makers.
4. *Direction:* Public officials and policymakers guide the process, request intelligence, make resources available and give feedback.



Map 1: Regional Economic Communities' Regional Early Warning Systems Headquarters

Map 1 visualises the operational areas of the REC's REWS. The respective headquarters are marked with an asterisk. Due to overlapping memberships, individual countries can belong to more than one REC and REWS.

## Early Warning and Response Network

The first REWS to elaborate on is the *Early Warning and Response Network* (ECOWARN) of the *Economic Community of West African States* (ECOWARN). The establishment of the ECOWARN was preceded by violent outbreaks in its member states, ECOWAS intervened in Sierra Leone and Ivory Coast. An ECOWAS *Monitoring Group* (ECOMOG) was established to observe the cease fire and maintain peace. In 1999 the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security established a comprehensive framework for regional security. Among other decision-maker bodies, a Regional Early Warning System, the ECOWAS Warning and Response Network, was established. In contrast to other REWS, ECOWARN builds on an EWS structure: The *West Africa Network for Peacebuilding* (WANEP). WANEP was founded in 1998 and later included into the ECOWARN architecture. Both WANEP and ECOWARN utilise a three-fold approach on a local and national level and regional level for data gathering and analysis.

The first of dimension of their approach concerns the local level. Here, assigned individuals, so-called field monitors, located in on-site communities within every sub-region of the 15 ECOWAS member states are tasked to gather information. Field monitors assess data through more than 60 pre-defined socio-political conflict indicators. These indicators include a variety of categories ranging from traditional threats, such as activities of armed groups, to human-centric indicators, such as cultural conflicts and violence against women. National authorities provide the necessary training in information gathering and analysis to the field monitors. Due to cultural, economical differences within the region, however, community-based monitors can differ as to meet national or local standards. In order to accomplish such a broad and individualised approach, the ECOWARN and WANEP network is comprised of more than 500 *Civil Society Organisations* (CSOs) and thousands of individuals (WANEP 2017).

The second and third dimensions concern the national and regional level. CSOs and academic institutions analyse obtained data and reports to later peer-review them through

*National Early Warning Systems* (NEWS). NEWS include CSOs and governmental institutions, such as intelligence agencies, to coordinate early warning data gathering and analysis. By linking CSOs to governmental agencies, ECOWARN has access to a considerable amount of raw quantitative data and qualitative analysis (WANEP 2017). The third dimension concerns the regional level. When ECOWARN integrated the WANEP early warning structure, which extends across all West African countries, it developed an inter-governmental-CSO partnership at the same time. The partnership and information gathering and analysis process is mutually beneficial: ECOWARN counts on hundreds of CSOs and thousands of individuals for data gathering and analysis. Thereby, ECOWARN provokes CSOs proactive engagement in conflict resolution and political participation within ECOWAS' decision-making structures (Odobbo et al. 2017).

Eze and Frimpong summarise that “ECOWAS’s ability to foster strategic partnerships and cooperation with WANEP as a key agent of a sub-regional early warning system has contributed to making ECOWAS’s early warning one of the most comprehensive and integrated systems for conflict prevention and management on the African continent” (Eze & Frimpong 2021:187). WANEP's and ECOWARN's successful approach laid the foundation for integrative security policies of the African Union and other RECs. ECOWAS is currently assisting in the development and implementation of other REC's REWS.

## **Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism**

The second REWS reviewed is the *Conflict Early Warning Mechanism* (CEWARN) of the *Intergovernmental Authority on Development* (IGAD). After the crises in the 90s, such as Eritrea's long-lasting War of Independence, famines, civil wars in Somalia, and the intended secession of South Sudan, the seven member states of the IGAD at the Horn of Africa, decided to establish a common analysis and information channel. The *Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism* (CEWARN) was operationalised as a collective effort to advance peace and security in the IGAD region in 2002. CEWARN's mandate directs to “receive and share information concerning potentially violent conflicts as well as their outbreak and escalation in the IGAD region, undertake analysis of the information and develop case scenarios and formulate options for response” (IGAD 2021).

For this purpose, CEWARN uses a sophisticated information gathering and analysis

system, which includes networks of governmental and non-governmental stakeholders on regional, national and sub-national level. At the sub-national level, CEWARN's approach is similar to ECOWARN's. CEWARN uses field monitors to source information, which also use a set of socio-political indicators. Additionally, information is gathered through local committees consisting of state officials, such as local administration and security forces, religious leaders and NGO representatives. At the national level, *Conflict Early Warning and Response Units* (CEWERUs) and *National Research Institutes* (NRIs) oversee sub-national early warning data gathering and analysis and coordinate with local communities. CEWERUs, an interdisciplinary board consisting of individuals and organisations, including representatives of ministries, parliament, NGOs and academic institutions to coordinate policy recommendations and conflict response options. NRIs conduct further analysis, assist information gathering and recommend policy options. Public academic institutions hold a special role within the NRIs, as they are entrusted with verifying field monitor's information and review response options. At the regional level, a CEWARN unit and a Peace Council coordinate, monitor and control national mechanisms to report to IGAD decision-maker bodies (Hailu 2012).

One example of how CEWARN has been applied in the past can be seen in its successes mitigation of violent clashes between cattle-herding tribes in the border areas of Uganda and Kenya. Studies (WISP 2007) have shown that governments have had poor understanding of pastoral conflicts even though their spillover effects, for example through the proliferation of small arms, had an impact on the security situation of the entire region. CEWARN's data gathering efforts were pioneering for statistical documentation. Their efforts accelerated research regarding underlying conflict dynamics and possible solutions. Through that CEWARN developed a strategy to mitigate armed violence and cross-border conflict among cattle farmer communities. Its inclusive approach enhanced trust among stakeholders including regional authorities, governments as well as civil organisations and civil society (Tanui 2020).

## **Regional Early Warning Centre**

The third REWS is the *Regional Early Warning Centre* (REWC) of the *Southern African Development Community* (SADC). SADC decided to establish a REWS, in accordance to their Strategic Plan on Peace, Security and Defence. Although it was already

launched in 2003, it took seven more years until the REWC was operationalised. The core function of the centre is to provide information for vulnerability analysis and assessments of Southern Africa. Therefore, REWC “shares information on major issues posing threat to the security and stability of the region to compile strategic assessment and analysis of data collected at regional level and propose ways and means for preventing, combating and managing such threats” (SADC 2021).

In order to achieve the objectives, the SADC security-policy protocol initiated early warning units in each member state reporting to the REWC. However, as the national early warning units are under control of the respective national security sectors, they are closed to CSO's. Consequently, input and output to the REWC is reserved exclusively to state-actors (Motsamai 2018). On this ground Aeby (2021) deduces that the REWC is state-centric and focuses on traditional security through national intelligence. Accordingly, the REWC is staffed with national intelligence personnel and lacks of links to civil actors. Hence, the mechanism is not suited to provide mediation support and work with civil society as an early warning instrument. As the system is not sufficiently interconnected due to the lack of national centres, CSOs remaining not involved in information gathering and analysis, the REWC represent more of an intelligence community, which enforces a rather traditional understanding of security. This becomes particularly evident as the lack of information about the REWC clearly demonstrates. Unlike other Early Warning System that proactively publish studies and present their concept and development, the REWC remains secretive and rarely releases information publicly.

### **Central African Early Warning System**

The next REWS to analyse is the *Central African Early Warning System* (MARAC) of the *Economic Community of Central African States* (ECCAS). ECCAS experienced a rise of conflicts leading to political instability within its member states during the 90s, paralysing its institutions. Consequently, ECCAS broadened its mandate to actively promote peace and security in the region by adopting the protocol on the establishment of the Peace and Security Council for Central Africa in 2000. ECCAS established two security institutions: the *Central African Multinational Force* (FOMAC) and the Central African Early Warning Mechanism. By 2007, MARAC had begun to operate, tasked with the collection and analysis of information to report to ECCAS decision makers.

The data information process a number of different actors. Information is gathered by assigned individuals, so-called conflict observers, at a regional level in each member state. Per state, three individuals observe the security situation. Of these three, two are representatives of NGOs and the third is a national official, in most cases a member of the army or a police officer. Conflict observers report to the MARAC headquarters on a weekly basis, where analysts then process information, assess the security situation and summarise their findings in reports. Additionally, national offices observe the domestic security situation and function as coordination points between MARAC headquarters and conflict observers. These offices are, however, not operational yet (Meyer 2015).

MARAC's operationalisation has been hampered by several obstacles since its launch regional integration still faces challenges because of it. As discussed earlier, the sharing of sensitive data concerning internal state conflicts is a universal issue. Central African states are more exposed to this problem than other RECs as they face major domestic security challenges when launching MARAC. The Central African Republic, for instance, struggled with military revolts and attempted coups in the 90s, while the Democratic Republic of Congo was devastated by civil wars. Such political turbulences and uncertainty cumulated into mutual mistrust characterising the political relationships in the region. These determining political dynamics, could not be overcome by intergovernmental institutions like ECCAS. Furthermore, many states held a rather poor record of democratic institutions, particularly in the security sector, which negatively affecting early warning mechanisms. These factors coin the REWS up to this day: Although two-thirds of MARAC's conflict observers come from civil society, the required information-gathering methodology is closely linked to a traditional understanding of security. In contrast to ECOWARN's and CEWARN's systems that draw on socio-cultural and economic indicators for conflicts, security integration in Central Africa is challenged by a highly centralised and nation-focused structure with an emphasis on militaristic approaches to security issues (Meyer 2015).

MARAC's traditional understanding of security is also reflected in civil societies' role in early warning mechanism as it is limited to information gathering only. CSO representatives and academic institutions are neither represented in the information analysis process to expose the underlying causes of conflicts nor influence the decision-making process. The staffing also mirrors the poor efforts of MARAC for regional security integration: decentralised and human-centred REWS such as ECOWARN have several

thousand volunteers and employees, while MARAC employs only a few individuals. MARAC's centralised system has thus only limited capacity for information gathering and analysis. Meyer summarises that MARACS' "regional security cooperation is considered as a way to protect their regime against rebellions and centrifugal movements" (Meyer 2015:14). Overall it can be observed, that regional security integration remains incomplete and at a minimum stage in Central Africa.

### **Early Warning Mechanism**

The second to last REWS discussed is the *EAC Warning Mechanism* (EACWARN) of the *East African Community* (EAC). Not until 2012 did the EAC decide to operationalise their own REWS, the latest of all RECs. As of 2012, the AU's CEWS already established, the EAC has sought to model own mechanism coping the existing structures and processes from the CEWS. It consists of a Regional Early Warning Centre at the EAC Headquarter in Arusha, Tanzania, and national Early Warning Systems located in the six member states. The member states, however, failed to establish National Early Warning Systems. Consequently, the REWS headquarter is the only data gathering institution (Mwemezi 2019).

This current institutional state remains because continues political pressure of EAC member states. In 2015 and 2016, EACWARN predicted the likelihood a civil unrest in Burundi if the president were to extend his term in office. Following the principle of subsidiarity, the AU mandated the EAC to mediate between the conflict parties. By doing so, EACWARN proved its early warning operational capacity and potential but antagonised member states vis-à-vis EAC institutions. Due to the member states' disagreement about EAC's conflict resolution and prevention strategy, they sabotaged its security and peace efforts, resulting in the failure of the mediation process. So far, EAC member states prevented institutional power exercise as they fear interference in internal affairs, much like the one in Burundi. Following the events of 2016, Burundi's president remained in office and EAC was instructed to shut down its Peace and Security Department (Elowson & de Albuquerque 2016). Due to the political unwillingness of member states to implement their national early warning structures, EACWARN remains the least developed REWS.

## Conflict Early Warning System

The final REWS to analyse is the *Conflict Early Warning Systems* (COMWARN) of the *Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa* (COMESA). The COMESA established COMWARN in 2009. Its strategy is to focus “on analysis and early warning of structural vulnerability to conditions that threaten peace and stability in the COMESA region” (Engel 2016:116) and serve as an integral part of the CEWS. Therefore, the mechanism operationalised a system to gather information on structural causes of conflicts. COMWARN characterises structural causes as slowly changing over time, embedded in complex cultural, historical contexts, intertwined with other factors. The mechanism itself relies on statistical conflict indicators: The Peace and Prosperity Index including peace, health, wealth and economic integration to measure and predict structural conflicts. Additionally, more than 70 conflict variables of the categories governance, education, health, social, environment, economic, security and military assist the analysis of the index. COMWARN primarily draws from data gathered by international organisations and public institutions. Information is analysed through computer softwares to calculate scenarios leading to conflict, estimating the vulnerability of regions based on its historical data (Etyang et al. 2016).

Assessing COMWARN's methodological framework, Engel and Porto (2016) stress that its dependence from those of the African Union, wherefore the EWS are harmonised. However, COMWARN is fundamentally different and unique among the EWS used by RECs. Similar to ECOWARN and CEWARN it includes public and academic institutions. However, even though civil actors contribute to COMWARN's statistical data gathering they do not participate in the decision-making processes. Moreover, ECOWARN and SADC are most contradictory and inharmonic: SADC's systems is intelligence based, with no intersections to public institutions, whereas COMWARN has no intersections to the intelligence community. In contrast to ECOWARN and CEWARN, COMWARN has no field monitors deployed, instead drawing on open-source information only. Furthermore, COMWARN's methodological strategy has another disadvantage: The quantitative data-analysis approach is based on historical data unsuitable to respond to current or sudden events that stimulate the parameters of the system (Engel & Porto 2016).

## Conclusion: Regional Level

Regional economic communities have evolved from building blocks for Africa's economic integration to functioning as security actors. The growth of regional security organisations and their security initiatives is a serious trend affecting African security integration. However, the state of regional integration at regional levels varies widely, as shown through some of the REC's Regional Early Warning Systems. Regional integration has in fact advanced with the establishment of EWS: in West Africa and East Africa, there are strong organisations with sophisticated early warning security mechanisms such as ECOWARN, CEWARN and COMWARN. ECOWARN involves hundreds of organisations in its information gathering and analysis process, thus linking policy-making processes at the institutional level with civil society actors. CEWARN adopted ECOWARN's approach and succeeded in improving cross-border conflict within their region through enhancing cooperation between governmental and non-governmental institutions, comprehensive data gathering and conflict research. COMWARN, however, gathers data exclusively through open-source and, unlike ECOWARN and CEWARN, has no field monitors collecting information at a local level. Meanwhile, COMWARN, ECOWARN and CEWARN developed a focus on human-centric security. They explore conflicts beyond national borders and thus offer suitable information gathering and analysis tools to politically operate on supra-national levels.

In contrast to the aforementioned REWS', EACWARN and MARAC, the REWC is less developed. They are characterised by commonalities in methodology and operationalisation. They are weakly staffed and recruit mainly from governmental agencies, which reinforces a one-sided view of conflicts. This also reduces the integration of non-governmental organisations. SADC, for instance has developed a system that is intelligence-based. Its state-centred security understanding contradicts the human-centric approach and is therefore incompatible with the CEWS of the AU. EACWARN is paralysed, due to the political unwillingness of its member states, which also pursue a traditional concept of security and thus operational on limited level only. MARAC involves NGOs in information gathering but political participation is limited to state authorities only. However, the aforementioned differences among the REWS, their operational capability leads to considerable challenges with regard to integration into the CEWS. Similarly, an AU assessment points out that the “low connectivity between the CEWS and the EWS of the

RECs; the lack of connectivity between National EWS and REC EWS; and the variation of levels of operationalisation of various EWS at the level of the RECs” (AU 2020b:16) are the prevailing problems.

Different methodologies in data gathering result in numerous challenges. The parameters used by REWS to acquire data reflect a both state- and human-centric security understanding, leading to asymmetric political in- and outputs. While the human-centric approach favours the involvement of civil society in intelligence gathering and analysis, state-centric's favours rather a sharp distinction between public and non-public security actors. In the grand picture, human-centric approach in Early Warning Systems are to be favoured due to its inclusive features and constructive involvement of CSOs.

## **National Level**

### **National Intelligence Sectors**

The central actors in the international system are still the nation states. Hence, nation states determine national security dynamics. In order to analyse the polarity and power relations within a REC and nation-state, Buzan and Waever (2011) recommend categorising nation-states according to their degree of socio-political cohesion. Their proposal will guide this section and expose domestic security sectors ranging from traditional authoritarian to modern democratic governance as they are analysed according to their governance frameworks.

The differences in security and intelligence governance between Africa and Europe could not be greater: With progressing European integration, Europe's intelligence services became more and more characterised by democratic principles. By contrast, Africa's intelligence landscape ranges from many authoritarian to few democratic governance structures. National intelligence organisations and dynamics represent both chance and challenge to supra-national integration. This chapter elaborates on the transition of African intelligence services providing an overview of their development. Therefore, this chapter is organised into two sections. First, the theoretical section introduces the three principals of

democratic intelligence governance (executive, legislative and judicial) based on the United Nations Good Practices on Intelligence and illustrates them by looking at European Union member states. Second, based on the theoretical principles, African nations' intelligence governance is evaluated and categorised.

Jervis claims that “intelligence and intelligence services are simultaneously necessary for democracy and a threat to it” (Jervis 2007: ii). This statement might be nowhere more true than in Africa: Since 1950 more than 150 coups d'etat have been attempted, more than half of them successfully. Sudan counts 15 attempted coups, Sierra Leone ten and Burundi eight (Powell & Thyne 2011). Most coups involved military and intelligence units and were followed by authoritarian rule. Hence, it is of little surprise that the role of the security sector in general and the intelligence services in particular are biased in many African countries. To harmonise the intelligence sector and prevent political abuse the United Nations set up a standard for intelligence work. Identifying elements of good policy practices for intelligence the *United Nations* (UN) seek to “ensure respect for human rights by intelligence agencies while countering terrorism, including on their oversight” (UN 2010:1).

Democratic control of intelligence services consists of three basic principles: executive control, legislative oversight and judicial review. Internal and external controls of the civil society, democratic institutions, organisations and free press are additional pillars of oversight. According to Born and Leigh (2005), the executive branch defines tasks, specifies the purpose of intelligence, and make resources available. In this regard the UN intelligence framework (2010) emphasises not only intelligence's role as a protector of the nation-state but also stresses its commitment to the population and human rights. The purpose of the legislative or parliamentary oversight include to reviewing “the actions of federal departments, agencies, and commissions, and of the programs and policies they administer, including review that takes place during program and policy implementation as well as afterwards” (Aberbach 1990:2). Finally, the judiciary branch monitors and regulates the use of powers.

In addition to the control and supervision by the three state organs, there are further control measures. Internal mechanisms of command and control by the services themselves are equally important. Lastly, civil society, think tanks and academics, media and investigative press also constitute a control mechanism through failure detection and

alternative views. The presence of these additional control measures in the governance of intelligence, while not being a panacea, should facilitate an harmonised existence of intelligence within a democratic state.

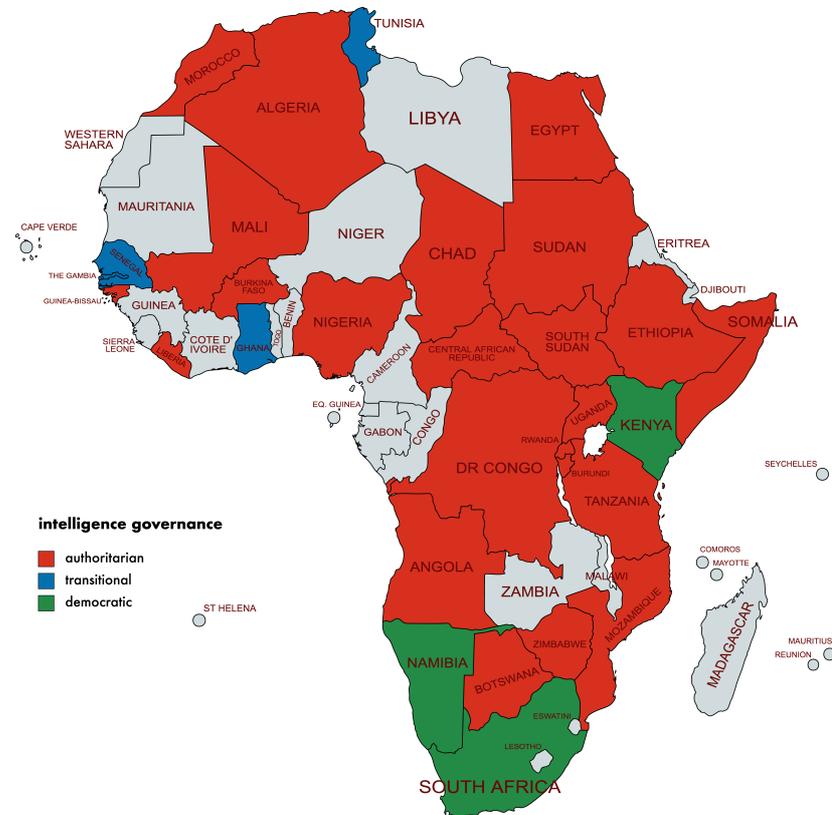
By looking at the EU it can be observed that domestic intelligence communities and general security governance have a certain diversity within their security complex. The general setup of intelligence services is regulated by legislative frameworks. In the majority of EU Member States (26 out of 27) legal provisions regulate their services' organisation. Additionally, most EU member states (23 out of 27) have separated intelligence services from law enforcement authorities (EU 2017). Although it is true that most EU states share those common features, the organisation of intelligence does slightly differ because it has been adapted depending on member states characteristics. However, European integration granted universal rights and thus substituted intelligence practices to civil oversight. Therefore, intelligence is subject to specific legal and political frameworks. The diversity among EU member states in terms of politics, history, and legal systems has resulted in a variety of bodies that oversee the intelligence services. Despite some minor differences they share many similarities: In most countries governments appoint executive oversight boards. The executive, in turn, is controlled by legislative intelligence committees. Except for Ireland, Malta, Finland and Portugal, all EU member states have such parliamentary intelligence committees. The EU member states' committees are provided with essential powers that allow them to, for example, receive intelligence reports, request information and oversee budget. Their oversight mandates, however, do vary in theory and practice: The Czech parliamentary committee for the Control of the Security Information Service, for instance, hold limited investigative authority. In fact, only few committees (Luxembourg, Germany, Hungary, Romania) possess enhanced powers, which include comprehensive investigative capabilities and the involvement in intelligence authorisation processes. Overall it can be said that the EU follows a democratic approach in intelligence governance.

In contrast to Europe, where intelligence governance and oversight developed into a high level of democratisation, Africa faces structural challenges in forms of its colonial heritage. Many African countries share a similar pattern of political development in which intelligence services represented a central pillar of regime survival. The continental political dynamics were determined by foreign powers with a sustainable influence on intelligence policies. Former European colonial powers have maintained their regional supremacy through

intelligence systems. Consequently, post-colonial Africa was characterised by authoritarian leaderships and “intelligence services have to a large extent emerged in the context of imposed post-colonial constitutional and legal frameworks” (Kwadjo & Africa 2009:5). Consequently, post-colonial intelligence adopted the oppressive frameworks and focused on authoritarian regime survival rather than on meeting democratic and pan-African requirements. Only after protracted political instability, marked by the politicised role of intelligence services and other security institutions, intelligence reorganisation was initiated as an extension of constitutional reforms (Kwadjo 2009). Ghana and Gambia, for instance, were ruled by autocratic presidents for decades, only freeing themselves from the grip of authoritarian security institutions through constitutional changes after an oppressive regime's abdication. Other states, such as Chad, which had been ruled by president Déby for 30 years, count on a highly authoritarian security apparatus. Hence, Chad's domestic security sector experienced few changes in the past three decades.

The following assessment evaluates African countries' political development in terms of their judicial, executive and legislative oversight in intelligence governance. The evaluation focuses on the actual implementation of the above-mentioned mechanisms and divides them into three categories: democratic, transitional and authoritarian.

- *Democratic* intelligence governance is guided by democratic principles represented by executive, legislative and judicial bodies and control mechanisms, as outlined for European Union member states.
- *Authoritarian* intelligence governance lacks of democratic power dispensation. Control is handed to few individuals only. Such governance is characterised by the absence of in-fact oversight, i.e a lack of effective legislative control or independent judiciary, even though such oversight might be formally established.
- *Transitional* intelligence governance has both, authoritarian and democratic elements. Reforms, however, are actively carried out to realise democratic intelligence governance.



Map 2: intelligence governance in African countries

Map 2 portrays African countries' intelligence governance categorised into democratic, authoritarian and transitional governance. Three countries, Kenya, South Africa and Namibia, are characterised by democratic intelligence governance. Four more countries, Gambia, Senegal, Ghana, and Tunisia are currently transforming from authoritarian to democratic governance, which is reflected in the implementation of intelligence reforms. The vast majority of African countries remain controlled by autocratic intelligence governance. Due a lack of information concerning the states marked in grey it is not possible to assess their domestic intelligence sectors. Although a data gap prevails, the underlying lack of transparency in the intelligence and security sectors does indicate rather authoritarian governance characteristics.

## North Africa in the post-Arab Spring era

Starting in December 2010, the protests in Tunisia soon spread like a wildfire across the Middle East and North Africa. Uprisings and rebellions, consequently shook the autocratic systems of Egypt Tunisia, Libya, Morocco and Algeria. In Egypt and Tunisia, insurgents chased rulers out of office. In between those states, Libya's lasting civil war escalated into a supra-regional power struggle. Out of all of them only Morocco's monarchy responded to protests by instituting reforms. The so-called Arab Spring is a historical turning point in the Middle East and North Africa with far-reaching political, economical and geostrategical consequences. Intelligence agencies were an important pillar of oppressive regimes and thus became a central subject of the post-Arab Spring nations' democratisation and reformation efforts. However, little remained of the initially ambitious plans for modernising the security and intelligence sectors. Egypt's and Morocco's intelligence services continued to play an integral part for the domestic autocrats. Also, Algeria's reform efforts to limit intelligence agencies' power and impose democratic oversight structures were reversed shortly after their implementation. Consequently, Algeria degenerated into a totalitarian rule relying on intelligence activities as oppressive means. Only Tunisia is characterised by a transition from former autocratic structures into a more modern intelligence oversight safeguarded by media and engaged civil society.

Egypt's particular problems arising from the Arab Spring Revolution are two-fold as the president overthrew the former government and later continued to strengthen pre-existing authoritarian structures. Egypt faced an uprising of the radical Muslim Brotherhood, challenging the young democracy's liberal aspirations. Former head of military intelligence and minister of defence, Al-Sisi, mobilised the agencies for a coup d'état to topple the Muslim Brotherhood affiliated regime. Supported by intelligence services and the army, Al-Sisi eventually became president. In the years to come Egypt's intelligence reformers witnessed several poor attempts at reformations (1910, 1921, 1952, 1954, 1967, 1971, 1986) which resulted in the agencies' power accumulation on the expense of weaker legislative and judicial oversight (Sirrs 2013). Indeed, Al-Sisi consolidated the power and influence of several agencies, which were involved in the presidential elections in 2014, 2018 and in the constitutional amendment campaign in 2019. Similarly, Al-Sisi centralised political power through a system of personal bonds and blood relatives. His three sons hold key positions in security agencies and beyond, inter alia, the military intelligence and Egypt Central Bank. Ten

years after the Spring Revolution, Egypt's intelligence services are a powerful and highly authoritarian instrument of the president, immune to formally implemented civil oversight (Springborg 2020).

Shifting the view from Egypt to Tunisia, it can be observed that Tunisia relied on a decentralised intelligence network of “organizations and individuals, inside and outside the government, working together to collect information on anyone who could potentially threaten the regime” (Bouguerra 2014:2). After facing mass protests the Tunisian authorities seek to strengthen a domestic and international opening of the agencies. Hence, special emphasis on interagency cooperation and coordination as well as institutionalisation of intelligence sharing with international counterparts and neighbouring countries lead to the creation of intelligence fusion centres. Transition and reformation efforts have been welcomed by the international community, particularly European states which support and fund the security sector reforms. The realignment strengthened operational capabilities to combat international terrorism. Additionally, Tunisia granted freedom of press, which becomes of particular importance at a later stage. Consequently, Tunisia's civil society became engaged in security-sector issues calling for the reformation of security agencies. A legal framework was established to regulate intelligence's powers especially in the use of surveillance. Parliamentary control of the intelligence services also remains a work in progress. Legislative action and initiatives, such as proposals for legal intelligence frameworks, increasingly strengthen the effective supervision of the services (Dworkin & El Malki 2018). Yet, Tunisia's intelligence governance is characterised by its reactive response to public discussions. Nevertheless, the country is gripped by a transitional trend that, at its core, is reforming the security architecture. Free press and an evolving debate-culture have become a major driver of intelligence governance reformation efforts (Matei & Kawar 2019).

In contrast to Tunisia, neighbouring Morocco is immune to calls for reformation. After the spring revolution Morocco's security apparatus focused terrorist threats to centralise power. Morocco's intelligence mandate was expanded to the extent appointing intelligence officers to judicial police officers. An additional intelligence agency, the Moroccan FBI, was established in 2015. The security and intelligence sector is controlled by a pro-monarchy elite in the Ministry of Interior that has little interest in jeopardising its status quo through liberal reforms. The directors of the Ministry of the Interior are appointed by the royal house and are therefore completely autonomous from elections and party politics. Therefore, King

Mohammed VI's relations with the Ministry of Interior determine the oversight of the intelligence services. The security apparatus consequently remains outside of state institution's control and supervision (Errazzouki 2020). The monarchy still counts on a comprehensive and oppressive intelligence apparatus, which closely monitors the population. Lastly it can be said that especially Morocco undertook noticeable efforts to build international bridges in regard to their intelligence services, particularly to European counterparts, to combat international terrorism (Dworkin & El Malki 2018).

Next up, Algeria experienced a short-lived democratic transition and control of intelligence services starting in 2014. While violent protests shattered Egypt and Tunisia, Algeria had been spared by civil upheavals. The intelligence services' role remained problematic for decades as they interfered with political governance. After almost 30 years in office, president Bouteflika restricted the intelligence agencies' power in 2014. As one act of power limitation the military intelligence was dissolved and political reforms for democratic transition initiated. Additionally, judicial frameworks and civil oversight structures established legal criteria for supervision. Bouteflika, however, was overthrown in 2019 and interim president Benshala took office only to reversed his predecessor reformations. Benshala reinstated intelligence services' powers and freed them from control. By the end of 2019, any attempt to establish and enforce civil oversight had been broken down. Similarly, democratisation as well as power limitation failed, and intelligence services remaining powerful and highly involved in politics without efficient, independent oversight by authorities (Hallas 2020).

## **Democratic Intelligence Governance**

In contrast to the formerly discussed post-Arab Spring countries, South Africa, Kenya and Namibia established intelligence communities fully integrated into the principles of democratic governance, oversight and control. Theoretic frameworks of executive, legislative and judiciary branches were translated into mechanisms wherefore the individual branches exercise in-fact control in their respective areas of responsibility. However, this process was preceded by a period in which intelligence agencies played a repressive role, such as the one during the apartheid regime in South Africa.

As the first of these other countries, South Africa experienced a comprehensive

democratisation and reformation of its intelligence institutions after the end of the apartheid. All throughout the country coalitions formed as part of the anti-apartheid movement in the 50s. The main objective of the intelligence services during that time was to undermine any activity that maintained or strengthened political organisation. After overcoming apartheid in 1994, Nelson Mandela advocated to reform the intelligence and security functions. Since the successful transition to democracy South African intelligence services have taken on the modern perspective of focusing on a wide range of threats to the state and its society (Africa 2009). The implementation of the Intelligence Services Oversight Act in 1994 empowered civilian oversight and control: a new intelligence architecture had been established which consists of executive, judicial and legislative oversight mechanisms. A new judicial framework, a multiparty parliamentary oversight with a standing committee on intelligence, an inspector general and a human rights commission with investigation authority make intelligence governance transparent and publicly accountable in South Africa (Nathan 2009).

Similar to South Africa, Kenya reformed its intelligence agencies and integrated them into the democratic transition process. Facing political instability during the colonial era, for example during the Mau-Mau uprising, intelligence and other security institutions hound political rivals and secessionists with extreme force. Gaining independence in 1963 Kenya inherited an oppressive colonial intelligence system. Agencies remained strongly intertwined with police departments and responsibilities were ambivalent. Four decades passed and the Service Acts on Intelligence replaced the outdated intelligence agencies and practices with ones in accordance with democratic principles in the 90s: Defined responsibilities, particularly the separation of the agencies from police functions, paved the way for democratic transition. The intelligence acts established mandates for civilian control and investigative authority, making Kenya's intelligence institutions the most advanced, democratic in the region (Boinett 2009).

Besides South Africa and Kenya, Namibia took a number of important steps towards a more democratic intelligence governance as well. Namibia's Central Intelligence Service Act, passed in 1997, established lines of authority for intelligence governance within a constitutional framework. As one step the country has managed to uphold a clear division of responsibilities among the various security forces and agencies are upheld. The intelligence services are accountable to civilian authorities such as to the Parliamentary Committee on Security. Additionally, a judicial framework oversees intelligence actions and methods (du

Pisani 2003). All these steps have accomplished that Namibia now has a serious foundation onto which further steps towards democratisation can be built upon.

## **Transitional Intelligence Governance**

Few African states have been able to initiate a sustained reformation of the intelligence services. After a troubled post-colonial period, Gambia's, Ghana's and Senegal's intelligence governance developed into hybrid systems with democratic and authoritarian structures and control mechanisms. Due to their international partners' support and funding, whose intelligence community is marked by an ongoing transition process into modern intelligence agencies based on democratic principles. However, political obstacles jeopardise further progress.

The first country with signs of transitional governance is Gambia. Gambia's president Yahya Jammeh remained in office for more than 20 years, relying on an oppressive security apparatus. After a change of government in 2017, the reformation of the security sector became a key campaign of Gambia's post-autocratic transformation agenda. Supported by the UN, AU, EU, and ECOWAS, Gambia implements first reform initiatives. In the course of their initiatives, the *National Intelligence Agency* (NIA) was re-founded as the *State Intelligence Service* (SIS). The SIS draft bill is currently being reviewed by Gambia's legislative authorities. The intelligence roadmap lays out several more reforms, such as decentralisation of intelligence oversight, until 2025. However, domestic political tensions delay the progress of Gambia's intelligence itinerary (Mutangadura 2020).

The second country which can also be categorised to be in a transitional state of governance is Ghana. Ghana suffered from political instability and experienced several coups, often initiated by intelligence and army units, up until the 80's. As democratic movements and demands gained momentum they created a political environment for liberal reforms. Subsequently, the new constitutions, passed in 1992, included detailed provisions for the governance of security structures. The constitution marries the intelligence community to the National Security Council, thus bonding it to constitutional law. As a result of this, intelligence agencies lost their anonymity and became subject to law for the first time in history. In addition, the constitution established a Human Rights and Administrative Justice Commission, one of whose tasks it is to monitor the activities of intelligence officers. The

Security and Intelligence Agencies Act, passed in 1997, marked another mile stone to democratic transition as a comprehensive framework codified democratic accountability. The initial mutual suspicion of involved actors and institutions delayed transitional progress because of the troubled role of intelligence agencies in Ghana's history. However, a considerably positive development took place by the end of the 90s: A centralised administration boosted the efficiency of the services while normative regulations established a legal basis for parliamentarian oversight and judicial control. Despite this progress, Ghana remains stuck in transition (Obuobi 2018). Obuobi summarises that "the legal framework for intelligence governance is largely robust to ensure overall democratic control in the country, the weaknesses inherent in the institutional mechanisms, and more crucially, the lack of political will and enforcement of constitutional and legal provisions, are significant hindrances to effectiveness" (Obuobi 2018:331).

The last country to undertake the transition towards a democratic governance is Senegal. After gaining independence in 1960 Senegal remained relatively stable due to an overall successful democratic transition process. Reforms of the security sector services deposed the national intelligence community within a single coordination body. The reform also took into account the need for granting greater prerogatives to civilian oversight: Judicial and legislative control is executed within a stable environment of democratic institutions. However, parliamentarians lack knowledge about intelligence issues as it is considered a branch serving the executive. The general lack of interest in intelligence matters explains the low level of engagement of parliamentarians on this issue. Similarly, the media and civil society shows little interests and security and intelligence matters either (Bathily 2018, Ouédraogo 2016).

### **Authoritarian Intelligence Governance**

Legislative and judicial branches face structural challenges in most African countries as they are submissive to executive authority. Parliamentary committees for intelligence often lack access to information and cannot sufficiently fulfil their oversight mandate. Similarly, judicial frameworks remain theoretical as intelligence and security agencies continue to operate within a legal vacuum. As a legacy of the post-colonial era, power is still centralised on the executive branch. As a result of this many countries face internal security challenges, exerted through autocratic governance structures which makes transitioning towards

democratic forms intelligence governance even more difficult.

The first country to struggle with negative effects from its existing autocratic governance is Uganda. Uganda gained independence in 1964 but experienced almost two decades of political instability. Throughout this period security and intelligence institutions were misused to prolong governmental terms in office. When political stability increased during the 80s the Ugandan Security Organization Act established a framework of functions and responsibilities. However, autocratic control and rather vague formulation of oversight mechanisms hinder a democratic transformation. Since then the intelligence sector is characterised by stagnation and lacks behind in clear mandates, accountability mechanisms and parliamentary oversight (Agaba 2009).

Different from Ugandas problems, Tanzania faced challenges of another kind. Here intelligence services was an informal part of the police force and had been instrumentalised by domestic autocrats for political purposes. The Intelligence Security Service Act of 1996 established a new intelligence service marked by broadly defined duties and responsibilities. Judicial authorisation, for instance, is rarely required for intelligence action. Since then Tanzania did not built on the initial step of democratisation of its intelligence apparatus and it remains without sufficient transparency and oversight (THRDC 2015).

Similar to Uganda, the power of Nigeria's intelligence organisation has been abused for one-dimensional political purposes. The Nigerian intelligence community was an instrumental part of the former authoritarian regime. Therefore, legislative and judicial bodies were subordinated to authoritarian rule. Since Nigerias return to democracy in 1999, liberal reforms have progressed slowly. Legislative oversight was strengthened but parliamentarians lack expertise and access to information to carry out their mandate, while at the same time being regularly undermined by the executive branch. For that reason, political espionage and abuse of intelligence resources are still common as intelligence is coordinated through the governments executive offices without independent oversight (Aluko 2015).

The next country to struggle with its autocratic governance structures is Rwanda. It received international support to demobilise and reform its security forces after the genocide in 1994. This provided crucial support in the disarmament of the country and helped t o put an end to the slaughter of an ethnic minority. While demobilisation was largely successful, the security sector lacks reforms and “civilian oversight, accountability mechanisms and a

democratic institution, seem to be absent from the Rwandan agenda” (Wilén 2012: 1329).

A similar fate experiences the Democratic Republic of Congo. Gaining independence from Belgium in 1960, intelligence agencies focused on regime protection for decades. Beginning in 2003 on control mechanisms were established: Parliamentary oversight exerts power on intelligence through independent subcommittees. Such mechanisms, however, are rather symbolic and control is executed sporadic. Similarly, legal frameworks exist but the judicial body remains weak due to the overall malfunctioning of the judicial system in Congo. Hence, intelligence services operate regularly outside the law, for instance to intimidate political opposition (Kasuku 2016).

Another country coping with challenges posed by autocratic governance structures is Sudan. During 30 years of post-colonial military dictatorship, Sudan had been run by oppressive means up until the Sudanese revolution in 2019, which initiated a process of democratisation. The *National Intelligence and Security Service* (NISS) was replaced by the *General Intelligence Service* (GIS) as part of the political transformation process and realignment of intelligence services. Currently, Sudans post-revolutionary transitional government rhetorically emphasises the importance of reforming internal security structures but has yet failed to implement any. Therefore, intelligence remains in absence of structured civilian oversight (Bishai 2020).

As a former part of Sudan, South Sudan inherited similar political obstacles. It independence from Sudan in 2011. During the post-independence institutional building process Oyai Deng Ajak, minister to National Security, pledged to subordinate the newly established *National Security Service* (NSS) to independent civil oversight. Furthermore, Ajak envisaged that “continuous oversight of the security forces will allow our institution to evolve and become a world class security organization that serves the demands of free citizens” (Adeba 2020:23). While the new South Sudanese constitution codified legislative and judicial oversight, the legislative committee still consist of members of the ruling party only. Furthermore, the president has to approve the appointments of each individual in order to enter into the committee. Similarly, judicial appointments depend on the presidents decision, resulting in the undermining of judicial oversight. Hence, initial demands to oversight were realised in theory only: Personal bonds, due to the in-fact president's appointments of members to the control mechanisms, overshadow formally established legislative and judicial

oversight. Rolandsen (2015) attests a poor record to the executive relationship to potential oversight structures: “The executive holds a disproportionate share of the power. Judges and members of parliament know that if they push too hard they will be dismissed” (Rolandsen 2015:166). In practice, the South Sudanese regime established insufficient oversight and concentrates power on the president to this day (Adeba 2020).

Not only South Sudan's but also Botswana's attempts at a more democratic governance approach have been defied by an overpowered presidential position among other things. It intelligence was conducted by units in the police and military without specific regulative frameworks until the Intelligence and Security Services Act ushered the *Directorate of Intelligence and Security Services* (DISS) in 2007. Although the mandate provides the DISS with executive powers, much control has been issued to the president. The reasoning behind this is that the parliamentary members of the oversight committees. Moreover, such committees have limited access to information and can thus not fulfil their mandate sufficiently. The judicial structure is politically influenced and does not represent an independent oversight body. Hence, both judicial and legislative control mechanisms are undermined as political challenges vis-à-vis remain the executive body. Furthermore, other intelligence agencies besides the DISS are excluded from the aforementioned frameworks and operate in an unregulated environment (Tsholofelo, 2014).

Another country struggling with its autocratic governance structures and a lack of professionalism among the parliamentarians is Burundi. The country suffered twelve years of civil war until the implementation of a new constitution in 2005 ended the conflict. In addition to the reorganisation of intelligence services, mandates for independent judicial and legislative control of security institutions were introduced. Although attempts to realise such efforts have failed so far, parliamentarians still hesitate to interfere in intelligence matters. This is due to the problematic history of the intelligence services in Burundi and their practices, as they suffered from eight coupes, latest of which took place in 2015 and involved intelligence and army (CIGI 2010, Jobbins & Ahitungiye 2016).

Another scenario revolving around an abusive president emerged in Chad, however in a much different way. Chads president Déby was in office for more than 30 years. His authoritarian regime consolidated power and expanded intelligence mandates most recently in 2017 (Dupuis & Baig 2020). For this purpose, *Zaghawa*, an ethnic group which the president

belongs to, holds key positions in government and security agencies together with members of Déby's family. The president succumbed to injuries sustained from fighting while visiting troops on the front line in northern Chad in April, 2021 resulting in one of his sons claiming succession as interim president. The political future of Chad remains uncertain after the recent and sudden passing of the late, long-serving president. However, as Déby's familial and ethnic ties are strongly intertwined with the intelligence and security services, reformation of the security sector remains unlikely (Devermont 2021).

Not only Chad, but also Burkina Faso suffered from decades of authoritarian leadership. After almost 20 years of autocratic rule a political transition process was initiated in 2014. The *National Intelligence Agency* (NIA), founded in 2015, coordinates intelligence activities of several more intelligence agencies. However, autocratic structures define Burkina Faso's security sector to this day. According to the constitution the judiciary is free, but judges are in fact accountable to the president, which makes their status ambivalent. Regarding the legislative oversight, the Parliamentary Committee on Defence and Security of the National Assembly may initiate investigations on policy and security issues. However, the lack of political will and technical knowledge of security issues marginalise parliamentary engagement. Hence, the parliament oversight power remains unused. Furthermore, the president has much power over security and intelligence issues as he is also the head of the coordinating Defence and National Security Council (Kibora 2017).

Similar to Chad and Burkina Faso, Angola's president determined the domestic security sector almost entirely on his own. A presidential security cabinet keeps the president's control over the state at bay, as it cabinet oversees the parliament and judiciary. After nearly four decades of president dos Santos autocratic leadership, his successor and former general, João Lourenço, took office in 2017. As he resided in his new position he promised comprehensive reforms to modernise the state. Lourenço inherited a country with an overwhelming security and intelligence network, which controls the domestic political dynamics. Nevertheless, the president left the autocratic and oppressive security apparatus unchanged. Personalised power, operated through informal hierarchies and personal loyalties, negatively affects Angola's security governance accordingly (ACSS 2020). Lastly, Lourenço also dismissed and replaced central functions within the security and intelligence apparatus with officers who are loyal to him, when he took office (Roque 2020).

Another country coping with challenges posed by autocratic governance structures is Ethiopia. The Ethiopian *National Intelligence and Security Service* (NISS) was first instituted in 2013's re-Establishment Proclamation. Multiple deviations from the constitutional expectations are governing the issues of accountability and oversight, undermining control. As the NISS is accountable to the executive oversight, much power has been given to the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister is significantly involved in the work of the NISS. He regulates appointments, holds budgetary powers, as well as supervises and oversees the overall execution of the service. Intelligence action is formally subject to judicial regulations but an anti-terror proclamation prevents any possibility of investigating methods which the NISS used in gathering information. Additionally, legislative control mechanisms were overridden as, according to the 2013's proclamation, the parliamentary committees control “may not be conducted in a manner that jeopardizes the national security of the country” (2013:11). Hence, after reorganising the intelligence sector, democratic accountability and control is prevented under the guise of countering terrorist threats and national security (Shimels 2018). Only the Prime Minister holds de-facto exercise of power over Ethiopian intelligence services.

The next country suffering from the downfalls of an autocratic president is Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe's president controls the oppressive secret police outside judicature frameworks and legislative oversight. The security apparatus is highly intertwined with politics and represents an essential pillar for the regime's security. Against this background, the National Security Council Act (2009) constitutes a framework for control of national policies on security, defence as well as law and order but has yet to be implemented. Nevertheless, a second constitution from 2013 contains a number of provisions that can be regarded as a significant first steps in the creation of a framework for oversight, such as the emphasis on political neutrality of the Central Intelligence Organisation. Several years after the constitution was signed, however, provisions have continued to be ignored or bypassed by the authorities on a regular basis. The failed implementation and enforcement of political achievements, regarding the 2013 constitution provisions, is therefore illustrative of domestic political obstacles that intelligence and security reforms face in Zimbabwe (GCSSG 2019a, Tendi 2016).

Besides Zimbabwe, Mali is also a country to struggle with negative effects from lasting instability. Initially, Mali consolidated relative political stability when gaining independence in 1960. However, despite overall democratisation efforts, the intelligence- and

security sector lacks real democratic control and oversight. Similar to many other African legislative branches, parliamentarians lack expertise and the access to information, thus having insufficient control mechanisms. Moreover, no permanent committee in charge of intelligence activities has been established yet. In addition, its judicial branch failed to translate control mechanisms in practice. Both judicature and legislative are subordinated to executive control, which is centralised around only a few members of the government. Lastly, it must also be mentioned that Mali's fragile political situation due to separatist movements and terrorist threats poses another challenge to the security sector (Maiga 2018). The country's instability of the security apparatus culminated in last year's coup, when military units arrested the president and other members of the government and senior officers.

Liberia suffers a similar fate to Mali concerning the impact of its internal instability. Liberia's 14 years of civil war ended in 2003 as a peace agreement was struck and the new government followed to pursue democratic transition. Similar to this development, a security sector reform consolidated peace and stability. The National Security Reform and Intelligence Act was passed in 2013 aiming to reduce the number of security institutions and to put them under civilian oversight. Although this poses a milestone in the transition process, calls for control have not been fully translated into mechanisms properly fitted to this task. Other than the general oversight of the two actors - legislature, president and executive - no judiciary control has been implemented yet. Hence, there is no clear protection mechanism to prevent the Liberian National Security Agency from over-stepping their authority. Structural challenges such as excessive executive domination and corruption remain present (Ouédraogo 2018, GCSSG 2018).

Similar to Liberia, Guinea-Bissau's lasting instability caused a lack of governance structures as well. Since its independence in 1970 Guinea-Bissau's political history is marked by violence, absence of lasting stability and functioning state institutions. Repeated international efforts, inter alia, made by the UN, EU, ECOWAS and AU, to reform Guinea-Bissau's security sector and to build up institutions have been hampered by political crises, civil wars and coups. However, little progress has been achieved as the overall number of ministries, which direct all nine internal security and intelligence agencies, has been reduced from seven to four in 2008. It remains a great need for civil oversight and accountability regarding the security architecture, without which the operation of state institutions is threatened (UN 2017, Kohl 2014).

On the opposite side of the continent, Somalia too is coping with challenges resulting from civil wars. Somalia's internal violent conflicts spurred dysfunction tendencies, turning Somalia into a failed state and inhibiting any progress until a national government was re-established in 2012. First steps were taken as its National Security Architecture, passed in 2017, set out key areas for reformation. It focuses on the implementation of civil oversight and accountability mechanisms. However, ambitious plans, supported by international partners who want to strengthen Somalia's security sector governance programme, fall short due to regional fragmentation and constant power struggles (GCSSG 2017).

Further south, Mozambique suffers problems of presidential overpowering, semi-professional parliamentarians and general reverberations of its violent conflicts. Mozambique gained independence from Portugal in 1975 and eventually became involved in internal rivalries and civil wars that only recently subsided in 2016. Regarding its security governance, the Council of Ministers is headed by the president and responsible for security related issues. The president, in turn, is also commander-in-chief of the security forces and has numerous other powers, such as declaring a state of emergency or appointing leading positions of security forces. He also appoints the Supreme Court's chief of justice and his first deputy, the Administrative Court, the Constitutional Council, as well as many more crucial positions within state institutions and organs. As the president regulates judicial and executive functions, personal relations overshadow formal constitutional power distribution (GCSSG 2019). The president's consultative organ, the National Defence and Security Council's mandates include the overall monitoring of security forces. In practice, however, the Council's control mechanisms have been hampered by its members' limited knowledge and practical experience in security matters. Due to judicial dysfunction, formally established legal frameworks fail to meet control obligations (IMF 2019).

Lastly, the Central African Republic experienced decades of political instability and violence after having gained independence in 1960. Although democratic transition had been initiated in 1994 the security sector in general and intelligence agencies in particular have been left out, remaining unaltered by reforms (Chirwa 2015). One reform vision, developed in cooperation with the World Bank and European Union in 2008, failed. Another reformation attempt was initiated in 2017. Both attempts stressed the importance for democratic accountability and called to establish a legal framework for intelligence governance (UN 2016). However, the out laid roadmap, including the creation of civil oversight institutions to

guarantee transparency and good governance, were not able to achieve any significant progress so far. Reformation attempts continue to be hindered and delayed by on-going state dysfunction and serious internal security threats such as terrorist groups (GCSSG 2019c).

## **Conclusion: National Level**

Africa's wide range of developments in the security sector pose a structural challenge to intelligence governance and regional integration. North African countries were characterised by democratic-revolutionary dynamics but lapsed into the former autocratic pattern. After the Arab-Spring revolutions Islamist extremism gained momentum and became an even more important objective for many African countries and well beyond national borders. Consequently, the international community, in particular the EU, seized the opportunity and strengthened its counterterrorism efforts through multilateral intelligence cooperation. Interagency cooperation and the sharing of intelligence, however, did not result in a democratisation of intelligence structures.

Among the North African countries several different developments took place in response to the aftermath of the Arab-Spring Revolution and can be summarised as follows. Out of all Northern African countries, only Tunisia improved its intelligence security governance reformation through its engaged public society and media. The country benefits from a diverse, partly highly politicised media landscape that has emerged ever since the beginning of the revolution in 2011. Conversely, Algeria witnessed only a brief period of democratic intelligence governance transition. However, since all attempts have been reversed in the years after the revolution, it degenerated into an old autocratic pattern. Just as Algeria has done, Morocco and Egypt strengthened the relationship ties of the intelligence and security services to the regime through personal bonds. Morocco's intelligence structures are intertwined through an elite, who is loyal to the King. Egypt's president Al-Sisi, having come to power through a coup of military intelligence, consolidated power by establishing a strict military rule that is immune to civil oversight.

The vast majority of African states remain in autocratic intelligence structures. Many of these countries have drafted and codified their reform measures in forms of intelligence acts, which have yet to be implemented. Furthermore, such autocratic governance systems are characterised by the rather vague wording of intelligence reformation acts, which

consequently have a negative impact on governance transformation. As another important issue, power remains concentrated on the president and the executive. Established frameworks for intelligence governance and constitutional constraints, for instance, are regularly undermined by personal bonds, as the respective presidents appoint and dismiss key positions in control bodies such as judges. Besides this, parliamentarians in authoritarian countries such as Chad and Sudan, are also being politically intimidated into neglecting their oversight mandate. Similarly, Kwadjo summarises that intelligence agencies “are executive instruments usually located in Presidential offices, a favoured organisational form in the immediate post-colonial period” (Kwadjo & Africa 2009:3). His statement underlines that legislative frameworks are rarely enforced and intelligence services operate within an in-fact legal vacuum.

International actors have sought to support intelligence reforms from the outside using several different approaches. Even though states receive comprehensive help from international actors many reform efforts still fail. These states - such as Somalia, the Central African Republic or Mali - are marked by internal security problems, i.e. terrorist threats and secessionist groups. Although each country is addressed by international peacemaking frameworks that also include peacekeeping troops, transformation efforts progress slowly. The underlying issue appears to be that democratic intelligence governance primarily restricts the framework for action in the event of a conflict, which is suboptimal in the face of acute threats. Studies with a historical and comparative focus have shown that most Western parliaments were not eager to deal with intelligence issues in depth either for similar reasons: The Cold War consensus, in particular the concern that too much parliamentary control of the services would benefit the enemy in the East, hinders efficient intelligence operation and thus prevents the active exercise of legislative mandates (Bergien 2021).

Another important issue is the problematic role of intelligence agencies in the political history as it has long-term effects on policy making and democratic control in states characterised by authoritarian and transitional intelligence governance. The extent to which parliamentary control has led to a self-imposed reorientation of the services, which follows legal standards much stricter than before, is disputed. In most legislative systems, parliamentarians did not make full use of the control options available to them because they either lacked the expertise or did not consider the reputation gain from working in committees to be worthwhile (Bergien 2021). Accordingly, parliamentarians, for instance in Burundi and

Burkina Faso, hesitate to interfere in security and intelligence matters, as they might expect problems due to the active exercise of their oversight mandates.

## Conclusion

Drawing upon theoretical approaches and empirical evidence, this study demonstrated that African security integration encounters several obstacles on all three levels of analysis.

The theoretical framework provided a broad ground to investigate Africa's security environment by decomposing it into security complexes. The security governance concept views joint efforts of international actors to solve a collective problem, thus offered a suitable basis for analysis. Buzan and Waever expanded the concept. They segment the international system into regional complexes, which are characterised by regional dynamics and thereby link together security governance and regional integration. For this purpose, the identification of critical developments, which facilitate or mitigate the design of joint strategies to strengthen the integration into a security complex is crucial for analysis. Furthermore, Buzan and Waever's theory proposes to assess and categorise nation-states as they determine internal security dynamics and consequently have an impact on supra-national levels.

Applying the security governance concept and Regional Security Complex Theory to African security institutions, particularly early warning components this paper argued that the *African Union* (AU) as well as *Regional Economic Communities* (RECs) pose interlinked Regional Security Complexes. Investigating their relationships and forms of cooperation this study decomposed Africa into three levels of analysis. First, the continental level analysed the *Continental Early Warning Systems'* (CEWS) institutional struggle with its *Regional Early Warning Systems* (REWS) and other organisations within and beyond the *African Peace and Security Architecture* (APSA). Second, the regional level examined the concepts and methodologies behind the REWS for common features and differences. Third, the national level exposed AU member states' internal intelligence and security sectors dynamics and trends.

The analysis of the continental level shows that the early warning structures of the AU and the RECs are central components of (sub)regional security complexes, but are in constant competition with each other, although they pursue the same objectives. In addition to the

CEWS, the *Committee of Intelligence and Security Services* (CISSA) and the *African Centre for the Study and Research of Terrorism* (ACSRT) multiply the institutional landscape of EWS in Africa. This results in overlapping mandates and responsibilities. CISSA, for instance, formerly an intelligence community, aggravates the problem, as is increasingly adopting CEWS' and ACSRT's frameworks. Similar to CEWS, ACSRT and CISSA provide intelligence, early-warning and policy-recommendation to AU decision-making bodies on conflict issues. Without differentiation of the functions and responsibilities of the three organisations, Africa's security complex is oversaturated with early warning institutions. It remains unpredictable what long-term consequences, such as political competition or contend for financial resources, will develop within the security complex.

Another important issue is that the AU experiences inherent structural and organisational obstacles with its RECs' security institutions that hamper security integration. This becomes evident in the political struggle between the AU's CEWS and the REC's REWS. On the one hand, the RECs enjoy a high degree of political freedom also in the operationalisation of their REWS. On the other hand, the AU is supposed to coordinate integration into an overall system and substitute RECs' REWS and other security institutions to AU authority. The high degree of RECs' autonomy led to the establishment of sub-regional security complexes. Their competing interpretations of conflict management were exemplified by the political struggle at the Horn of Africa. The uncoordinated actions of two RECs had a negative impact on early warning and intelligence sharing between security institutions and resulted in inefficient counterterrorism efforts against Al-Shaabab. Such rivalries are accelerated as early warning institutions are continuously in competition with their early warning and intelligence products for the AU's attention and recognition of their political relevance. Hence, it can be argued that regional security institutions serve as an instrument of political power within a security complex. Through the identification with regional security complexes, RECs seek to achieve grater advantages vis-à-vis the AU and other regional actors. This struggle particularly manifests in early warning institutions as they provide the foundation for political decisions in the conflict area.

Also the assessment of the regional level exposed obstacles to security integration as RECs' have their own interpretation of EWS therefore lack a conceptual agreement. Some RECs favour a transparent open-source-based approach, few other RECs, insist on traditional intelligence gathering and analysis. Comparing the REWS methodologies discovered

significant differences. West- and East African REWS (ECOWARN, CEWARN and COMWARN) are characterised by a transparent and human-centric approach. Information is gathered by individuals at the local level and analysed jointly by state authorities and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), such as academic institutions. Consequently, joint security governance merge together a range of civil actors and individuals as well as state authorities and security institutions.

In contrast to West- and East Africa's inclusive approach, the Central-East- and Southern African REWS (REWC, EACWARN, MARAC) follow a fundamentally different methodology. In Southern Africa, an intelligence-based, state-centred REWS had been developed, which limits the integration of CSOs and provides little access to civil society. Consequently REWC, for instance, is hardly embedded into local dynamics, while ECOWARN is highly intertwined with local communities thus gather different data. Also EACWARN member states share REWS's state-centric security understanding. Their antagonism of possible interference in internal affairs paralyses the early warning institutions. Consequently, such different methodologies lead to challenges as they negatively affect the harmonisation of CEWS and REWS. Differing parameters used by REWS to acquire data, as reflected in a state-centred or human-centric understanding of security, generate asymmetric data input at the continental level. Hence, as long as the individual security complexes have a different understanding of security, a supra-regional integration of EWS will remain problematic.

Finally, the evaluation of national security dynamics, manifested in the development of security sectors, showed a high degree of divergence in Africa. Few states have democratic security and intelligence governance, which includes legislative, judicial and executive oversight. In North Africa, the pre-Arab Spring autocratic structures were re-established after the revolutions. The re-alignment of the security apparatus with the ruling elite leaves little room for control outside the executive branch. Only Tunisia has thrown off its old autocratic structures and is in a transition process to democratic intelligence and security governance. Apart from Tunisia, there are only a few other countries in transition process. Only Ghana, Senegal and Gambia are actively pursuing a reformation. Since these states are all located in West Africa, it raises the question of how the reciprocal influence of national dynamics and the ECOWAS security complex affect reformation attempts. In this context, the relationship of states within a security complex and their potential to determine supra-regional

democratisation of the security sector should be further examined. All other African countries, unless an investigation was prevented by a shortage of information, are characterised by authoritarian security governance. The study revealed that most countries are in support of a transition process towards democratic intelligence governance, efforts, however, remain rhetorical. Power concentration on the executive branch, overshadows legislative and judicial control mechanisms.

The African Union covers all 55 African states, thus comprises a large and diverse population. The demographic development will further strengthen Africa's role in the future. While 1.3 billion people live on the continent today, there will be about twice as many in 2050 (2.5 billion). Africa will account for more than 40% of the total population in 2050 (2020: 17%). No other continent is experiencing such a drastic increase in its population. Already today, more than half of the African population is younger than 20 years of age (UN: 2019). The rapid increase in population is already exacerbating many challenges in African states. The past decades have shown that spillover effects significantly influence the security situation in regions. In particular Europe's foreign policies had been influenced by African security dynamics. Consequently, Africa will inevitably become one of the most important political players in security policy and beyond. Hence, studying Africa's security structures is more necessary than ever before.

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