5. Redefining Peacekeeping in Africa: UNSC Resolution 2719/2023 and the Challenge of Implementing African Solutions: Examples from Post-ATMISS Arrangement in Somalia

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Abstract

Africa hosts the largest share of UN peacekeeping missions but continues to face recurring conflicts, fragile political transitions, and complex security threats. This article traces the evolution of peacekeeping on the continent from early missions such as ONUC (Congo, 1960) through Somalia and Rwanda, highlighting persistent dilemmas over mandate clarity, resources, and operating without viable peace agreements. It argues that durable peace requires stronger African ownership and examines the deepening UN–African Union partnership, including APSA institutions (AU Peace and Security Council, early warning, standby force, peace fund) and models such as hybrid missions (UNAMID) and UN logistical/financial backstopping of AU operations in Somalia (AMISOM→ATMIS→AUSSOM). A central focus is UN Security Council Resolution 2719 (adopted 21 December 2023), which creates a pathway for AU-led missions to receive up to 75% of budgets via UN-assessed contributions, paired with human-rights due diligence, reporting, and accountability requirements. The article stresses that implementation is politically contested—especially due to U.S. concerns over oversight and cost—and institutionally constrained by AU capacity limits and internal divisions. Somalia's transition to AUSSOM is presented as a critical test case for whether predictable financing, coherent mandates, and coordinated political strategies can enable credible, African-led peace operations.

1. Introduction

Africa remains the biggest host of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, yet it continues to grapple with complex security challenges, fragile political transitions, and recurring conflicts. While international interventions have provided critical support in mitigating crises, there is a growing recognition that durable peace on the continent must be driven by Africans themselves. This article explores the trajectory of peacekeeping in Africa, the evolving partnership between the UN and the African Union(AU), and the push toward African ownership and strategic autonomy in peace support operations, particularly in light of the recently adopted UN Security Council Resolution 2719/2023.

This study employs a qualitative research approach, primarily relying on document analysis, a literature review, and the researcher's professional experience in international diplomacy and peace operations in Africa. Official UN and AU policy documents, peacekeeping resolutions, scholarly works, and current reports from think tanks form the basis of the document review. This study departs from the widely employed UN-centric frameworks on international peacebuilding, which focus on the evolution of peace operations within the global political structure[1]. Instead, it explores African ownership and

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[1] Shinoda, Hideaki 2024 *Partnership Peace Operations UN and Regional Organizations in Multiple Layers*

responsibility in peacebuilding and peacekeeping operations within the continent.

The objective of this article is to critically examine the transformation of peacekeeping in Africa, with a specific focus on enhancing African ownership, the implications of UNSC Resolution 2719/2023, and the future of AU-UN cooperation. It also reviews the operational and political dynamics of Africa-led peace support operations with particular reference to the ATMIS-to-AUSSOM transition in Somalia.

Africa continues to bear the burden of global peacekeeping operations, yet efforts toward African ownership and strategic autonomy remain limited. The adoption of UNSC Resolution 2719/2023 marks an institutional breakthrough, enabling AU-led missions to receive up to 75% of their annual budgets through UN-assessed contributions. However, implementation faces serious challenges due to US opposition and donors' reluctance to relinquish financial control. Internal weaknesses within the African Union, such as limited operational capacity, political divisions, and risks of geopolitical exploitation, further threaten the credibility and effectiveness of Africa-led peace support operations. The ATMIS-to-AUSSOM transition in Somalia serves as a critical case study, highlighting both the potential and the complexities of regionalized peacekeeping under African leadership.

1. Brief History of UN Peacekeeping Operations in Africa

The United Nations' engagement in peacekeeping on the African continent began in earnest in the early

of International Security. Routledge

1960s with the launch of the United Nations Operation in the Congo (ONUC) in 1960. The United Nations initiated this mission in response to the Congo Crisis, which erupted shortly after the country gained independence from Belgium[2]. Secessionist movements, political instability, and foreign intervention marked the crisis and threatened to plunge the newly independent state into a full-scale civil war. The task of ONUC was to restore order, maintain the territorial integrity of Congo, and support the central government. Despite immense logistical challenges, internal divisions, and conflicting interests among member states, the mission succeeded in preventing the disintegration of the Congolese state and averting wider regional conflict.[3] Though controversial in its execution and outcomes, ONUC established a foundational model for future UN peacekeeping operations in Africa.

ONUC's deployment set a precedent for subsequent UN peacekeeping engagements across the continent, illustrating both the promise and the limitations of international intervention in complex post-colonial settings. It underscored the recurring dilemma of balancing national sovereignty with the international community's responsibility to maintain peace and security, a challenge that would reemerge in later interventions such as Somalia (1992-1995), Rwanda (1994), and Sudan (2005).[4] The mission also revealed the need for clearly defined mandates, robust logistical frameworks, and improved coordination between the UN and regional actors-lessons that have shaped peacekeeping doctrine over the decades.

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[2] Durch, William J., ed. *The Evolution of UN Peacekeeping: Case Studies and Comparative Analysis*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993; Goulding, Marrack. "The Evolution of United Nations Peacekeeping." *International Affairs* 69, no. 3 (1993): 451–464.

[3] Ibid.

[4] *United Nations. 2020. United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines.* https://peacekeeping.un.org

Consequently, ONUC cemented Africa's place at the center of UN peacekeeping efforts, initiating a complex yet enduring partnership between the United Nations and African States in conflict resolution, peacebuilding, and regional stabilization.[5]

In the years following ONUC, the United Nations has undertaken numerous peacekeeping missions across Africa in response to persistent conflicts, civil wars, and humanitarian crises. One notable example is the United Nations Operations in Somalia (UNOSOM) in the early 1990s, which the UN launched to stabilize Somalia during a devastating civil war and prevalent famine.[6] The mission faced enormous operational and political challenges, including fragmented armed factions often called warlords, a lack of a central authority, and a dangerous operating environment. These challenges culminated in the infamous "Black Hawk Down" incident in October 1993, when US forces operating under the UN umbrella were ambushed in Mogadishu, resulting in the deaths of 18 American soldiers and hundreds of Somali casualties. This incident highlighted the inherent risks and complexities of peacekeeping in fragile states. It failed states, ultimately leading to the premature withdrawal of international forces and raising serious questions about the limits of UN peace enforcement in active conflict zones[7].

The difficulties encountered during the UN's mission in Somalia had a profound impact on its

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[5] *Bellamy, Alex J., and Paul D. Williams. Understanding Peacekeeping. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013.*
[6] *Clarke, Walter S., and Jeffrey Herbst. 1997. "Somalia and the Future of Humanitarian Intervention." In Learning from Somalia: The Lessons of Armed Humanitarian Intervention, edited by Walter S. Clarke and Jeffrey Herbst, 65–90. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.*
[7] Ibid 1997, p. 71

subsequent peacekeeping operations, particularly its ability to respond promptly and effectively to the 1994 Rwandan Genocide against the Tutsi population. The tragic outcome of the UNOSOM mission, especially the "Black Hawk Down" incident, heightened caution and reluctance within the United Nations and among key member states, particularly the United States. This indecision translated into a slow and inadequate international response to the unfolding genocide in Rwanda. Despite clear warning signs and urgent appeals from the UN Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNANIR), the mission was under-resourced and constrained by a limited mandate. Political reluctance, fear of casualties, financial limitations, and institutional inertia prevented timely and decisive action. As a result, over 800,000 people were killed within approximately 100 days, marking one of the most catastrophic failures in UN peacekeeping history.[8]

Since 1960, there have been more than 30 UN peacekeeping missions across Africa, more than in any other region[9]. As of 2024, the United Nations oversees 11 active peacekeeping operations worldwide, with many of these missions concentrated in Africa. These operations play a vital role in stabilizing conflict-affected regions, supporting political transitions, and protecting civilians. Among the most prominent ongoing missions is the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), which aims to protect civilians, support the peace

[8] *Barnett, Michael. 2002. Eyewitness to a Genocide: The United Nations and Rwanda. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press; Dallaire, Roméo. 2003. Shake Hands with the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda. New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers*

[9] Council on Foreign Relations. "The Role of Peacekeeping in Africa." *Council on Foreign Relations,* accessed 2025 https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/role-peacekeeping-africa

process, and facilitate humanitarian assistance amid ongoing armed conflict. Similarly, the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) continues to address widespread violence and instability, particularly in the eastern regions plagued by armed groups. In South Sudan, the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) supports peacebuilding, monitors human rights violations, and protects civilians in the aftermath of the country's civil war. The United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) remains engaged in monitoring the ceasefire and assisting in the potential referendum process concerning the territory's status. Meanwhile, the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) plays a critical role in maintaining peace in the contested Abyei area between Sudan and South Sudan.[10]

Despite their essential contributions, UN peacekeeping missions in Africa continue to face persistent and complicated challenges. These include severe resource limitations, logistical constraints, and underfunded and limited mandates, all of which affect operational capacity and long-term impact. Moreover, peacekeepers often operate in highly complex political environments where fragile state institutions, contested sovereignty, and deep-seated local grievances hinder conflict resolution efforts.[11] In many cases, international actors deploy peacekeepers to regions without a viable peace agreement or where host governments restrict mission activities[12]. The rising threats posed by non-state armed

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[10] *United Nations Peacekeeping. 2024. Current Peacekeeping Operations.* *https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/where-we-operate*.

[11] Stimson Center. "Host-Country Consent in UN Peacekeeping." 2023 https://www.stimson.org/2023/host-country-consent-in-un-peacekeeping

[12] *De Coning, Cedric, and Linda Gelot. Rethinking Peacekeeping Partnerships in Africa. Stockholm: Nordic Africa Institute, 2024.*

groups, terrorist organizations, and transnational criminal networks further complicate the security environment. These challenges underscore the need for renewed international commitment, stronger partnerships with regional actors, such as the African Union, and enhanced execution of mandates if UN missions are to remain effective in promoting sustainable peace and stability in Africa.[13]

2. UN—AU Cooperation in Peacekeeping Operations in Africa

Cooperation between the United Nations (UN) and the African Union (AU) in peacekeeping operations has evolved significantly over the past two decades, reflecting the growing recognition of the need for shared responsibility in addressing Africa's complex security challenges.[14] As the continent continues to grapple with protracted conflicts, weak state institutions, and fragile political transitions, joint or complementary peace operations between the UN and AU have become a central feature of international peace and security architecture in Africa.[15] These include hybrid missions like the African Union—United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), AU-led operations supported logistically or financially by the UN, and parallel deployments in which both organizations operate distinct but coordinated missions within the same conflict setting. Such cooperation has helped fill critical gaps in

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[13] Williams, 2023; De Coning and Gelot, 2024

[14] United Nations, 2017, United Nations and African Union. *Joint UN–AU Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security*. New York: United Nations, 2017. https://www.un.org/en/africa/osaa/pdf/au/un-auframeworkpeace-security2017.pdf

[15] Williams, 2023; De Coning and Gelot, 2024

rapid deployment, local legitimacy, and regional political leverage, even as coordination and resource constraints persist.[16] Currently, all active partnership-based peace operations are located in Africa, where every UN peacekeeping mission on the continent involves some form of collaboration with regional or sub-regional organizations. This approach reflects the multi-tiered international security structure outlined in the UN Charter, which recognizes the roles of global, regional, and national actors. The legal provisions for regional arrangements and collective self-defense within the Charter provide the foundational basis for such collaborative peacekeeping efforts.[17]

Historically, the AU's growing role in peace and security emerged in response to international inaction or delays, particularly during the Rwandan Genocide in 1994 and the Darfur crisis in the early 2000s. Cognizant of this, the AU's Constitutive Act established a provision to promote peace, security, and stability on the continent[18]. The African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) is the African Union's (AU) strategic framework for promoting peace, security, and stability across the continent. Established under the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (adopted in 2002 and entered into force in 2003), APSA embodies Africa's collective commitment to conflict prevention, management, and resolution. It also reflects the continent's desire for African-owned and African-led solutions to its security challenges. The key components of APSA include the Peace and Security Council, the Panel of the Wise, a continental early warning system, an

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[16] UN, 2017
[17] Shinoda, 2024
[18] AU Constitutive act, 2000

African standby force, and a peace fund. Moreover, APSA recognizes the role of Regional economic communities and regional mechanisms such as ECOWAS, SADC, IGAD, and EASF as building blocks and operational partners, especially in conflict early warning and peace support operations.[19]

The African Union peace and security council (PSC)[20,] established in 2004, was envisioned as a more proactive and intervention-capable body, enabling African-led peace support operations (PSOs) in crises where the UN was either unwilling or unable to act promptly. While the AU demonstrated stronger political will and regional legitimacy, it lacked the institutional strength, funding, and logistical capabilities that the UN could provide.[21] Consequently, the UN and AU developed frameworks such as the UN-AU Joint Task Force[22], the 2017 Joint Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security, and regular UNSC-AU PSC consultations to institutionalize collaboration. This mechanism aims to bridge operational gaps and enhance burden-sharing between the two bodies, especially in missions such as AMISOM (now AUSSOM) in Somalia, where sustained UN financial and technical support has been critical to AU efforts.[23]

Recognizing the African Union's comparative advantages—particularly its regional legitimacy, deep political understanding of local dynamics, and ability to deploy peace support operations rapidly —

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[19] Alhaji Sarjoh Bah, Elizabeth Chige-Nyangoro, Solomon Dersso, Brenda Mofya and Tim Murithi 2014 The African Peace and Security Architecture. A HandBook. Friederich Ebert Stiftung

[20] Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union.2002   Durban, South Africa

[21] Williams, 2011

[22] UN, 2027

[23] De Coning, Cedric, and John Karlsrud. 2020. *Towards a Shared Understanding of UN–AU Peace Operations Partnerships*. NUPI (Norwegian Institute of International Affairs).

the United Nations has increasingly pursued a policy of complementarity rather than duplication in Africa. The UN and AU formalized this strategic alignment by launching the UN–AU Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme in 2006, aimed at strengthening the AU's institutional capacity in peace and security. They further reinforced their commitment to collaboration through key UN Security Council resolutions—particularly Resolution 2320 (2016) and Resolution 2378 (2017)—which emphasized the need to establish predictable and sustainable financing mechanisms for AU-led peace operations authorized by the Security Council.[24] These resolutions marked a significant normative shift toward recognizing AU operations as integral components of the global peace and security architecture, particularly in contexts where the UN is unable or unwilling to deploy.

A prime example of this evolving partnership was the African Union–United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), which operated from 2007 to 2020. As the first joint peacekeeping mission with shared command and control between the UN and AU, UNAMID represented a milestone in institutional cooperation. The mission's hybrid structure enabled joint force generation, integrated planning, and a unified political strategy underpinned by both regional and international legitimacy. While the mission faced criticism for its bureaucratic complexity, logistical constraints, and limited impact on civilian protection in the latter stages of the Darfur conflict, it nonetheless established essential precedents in hybrid peacekeeping. UNAMID illustrated the possibilities and challenges of co-deployment, including issues of mandate interpretation, decision-making authority, and coordination

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[24] De Carvalho and de Coning 2019

between two very different institutional cultures.[25] Its legacy continues to inform current debates about how to structure future UN–AU operations, including those in Somalia and the Sahel.

In parallel with joint missions, the United Nations has increasingly provided logistical and financial support to African Union-led peace operations, notably through frameworks that enable the AU to maintain on-the-ground leadership while benefiting from UN technical and institutional support. A prime example of this model is the UN's sustained support to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), and its successor missions—the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS), and the newly launched African Union Support Mission in Somalia (AUSSOM). Through trust fund mechanisms, training programs, and logistics packages coordinated by the UN Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS), the UN has played a vital role in backstopping AU deployments in Somalia, ensuring operational continuity and strengthening AU capacity to conduct complex peace enforcement tasks.[26] This support reflects a pragmatic approach to burden-sharing, where the AU provides political will and regional legitimacy, while the UN delivers critical technical expertise, standardized procedures, and normative oversight.

Recent policy developments suggest a deepening commitment to African-led peace initiatives within a broader UN strategy to enable the AU to assume greater responsibility for regional security governance. The UN's *New Agenda for Peace* and deliberations at the 2025 Berlin Peacekeeping

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[25] *Nathan, Laurie. "Lessons from UNAMID: The Challenges of Joint AU–UN Peacekeeping." African Security Review 30, no. 1 (2021): 34–49*

[26] *Amani Africa. 2024. The AU as a Driver of Peacekeeping Reform: Emerging Trends and Strategic Outlook. Amani Africa Policy Brief Series.* https://amaniafrica-et.org.

Ministerial highlighted this shift, emphasizing the importance of a clearer AU–UN division of labor. Key focus areas include improved political alignment between both organizations, joint threat analysis mechanisms, and enhanced strategic coherence in mandate design and implementation.[27] These trends signal an evolution in the global peacekeeping architecture—from reactive international interventions to more regionally owned, UN-enabled responses to conflict. While this model offers the potential for more contextually grounded peace operations, it also demands renewed attention to accountability frameworks, sustainable financing, and mechanisms to bridge institutional differences between the UN and AU systems.

Nevertheless, key challenges continue to hinder the full realization of a robust and balanced UN–AU peacekeeping partnership. One of the most pressing issues is the lack of sustainable and predictable funding for African Union-led peace support operations. Despite recurring proposals to authorize UN-assessed contributions to AU missions—particularly those endorsed by the UN Security Council—such efforts have faced persistent political resistance, primarily from key member states concerned about financial burden-sharing and oversight mechanisms. Furthermore, unresolved questions around command and control, accountability, human rights compliance, and transparency remain critical points of divergence between the two institutions. These gaps underscore the need for further harmonization of standards, operational procedures, and monitoring frameworks to ensure that African-led missions meet international norms and expectations.[28]

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27 ACCORD, 2025
28 De Coning & Gelot, 2024

As African peace operations continue to evolve under the broader framework of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), the trajectory of UN–AU cooperation is increasingly shifting toward a strategic partnership model. In this emerging paradigm, the AU is expected to assume greater leadership in designing and executing regionally informed peace interventions. At the same time, the UN provides enabling support through political legitimacy, financial mechanisms, and normative guidance. This complementary model acknowledges Africa's growing agency in addressing its security challenges while reinforcing multilateralism through coordinated global-regional action. In sum, although substantial progress has been made in institutionalizing cooperation between the UN and AU, fully realizing an effective and equitable partnership will require sustained political will, adequate resourcing, and a shared commitment to the core objectives of civilian protection, conflict prevention, and durable peace on the continent.

3. UNSC Resolution 2719 (2023)[29]

UNSC approved Resolution 2719 on 21 December 2023. Resolution 2719 (2023) emphasizes the importance of strengthening collaboration between the United Nations (UN) and the African Union (AU) to maintain peace and security in Africa. Although the resolution was approved by the UNSC five years later than intended, its significance for Africa-led peacekeeping operations is vital.

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[29] *United Nations Security Council. 2023. Resolution 2719 (S/RES/2719). https://undocs.org/S/RES/2719(2023).*

Resolution 2719 strengthens the UN–AU strategic partnership by emphasizing collaboration, complementary roles, and clear political strategies supported by strong accountability measures. It introduces a major financing provision that allows AU-led peace support operations to receive up to 75% of their annual budgets through UN-assessed contributions, addressing longstanding challenges of unpredictable funding. The resolution also underscores strict adherence to international human rights and humanitarian law, applying the UN's Human Rights Due Diligence Policy to ensure robust oversight in AU missions.

Additionally, the resolution advances burden-sharing by urging AU member states to contribute personnel and resources while calling on international partners to maintain financial and technical support. It reaffirms the commitments of UNSC Resolution 1325 (2000), stressing women's meaningful participation and increased deployment in AU-led operations. Operational accountability is further reinforced through requirements for joint planning, monitoring, and reporting, with the UN Secretary-General and AU Commission Chairperson mandated to submit regular progress reports to the Security Council.

This resolution marks a significant stride in establishing and securing sustainable funding for AU peace missions. It ensures that such operations are accountable, uphold human rights, and make substantial contributions to long-term peace and security in Africa.

Despite its significance, Resolution 2719 (2023) has not garnered unanimous support, particularly from the United States, which abstained from the vote and has expressed strong reservations about the implications of its financing provisions. US officials have raised concerns over granting UN-

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assessed contributions—covering up to 75% of AU-led mission budgets—arguing that such mechanisms could create accountability gaps and place undue financial burdens on major donors without sufficient control over operational standards.[30] The US position reflects a broader strategic hesitation toward multilateral peace operations it does not directly oversee, and a preference for bilateral or coalition-based support frameworks. While Washington continues to rhetorically support African peace and security initiatives, its resistance to institutionalized funding under Resolution 2719 exposes underlying tensions between normative commitments to African agency and geopolitical calculations about control and cost. These dynamics will continue to shape the implementation of the resolution and the future of UN–AU cooperation in peace operations.

4. Africa's Need to Own Peace Support Operations Under the African Union

The African continent continues to grapple with a diverse range of internal conflicts, including civil wars, insurgencies, and persistent political instability. These crises have necessitated robust peacekeeping interventions to restore order, protect civilians, and support post-conflict reconstruction. However, the heavy reliance on external actors—particularly the United Nations (UN)—to lead peacekeeping operations has revealed several limitations. Challenges such as delayed troop deployment, inadequate logistical and financial resources, and insufficient understanding of local socio-political dynamics have

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[30] Tchie 2024

often undermined the timeliness and effectiveness of UN interventions in African contexts.[31] These operational gaps have spurred criticism over the appropriateness and responsiveness of externally led peacekeeping efforts on the continent.

In light of these challenges, there has been a growing consensus among African policymakers, scholars, and regional organizations on the need to "Africanize" peacekeeping by increasing the continent's ownership of its peace and security agenda. The continent's ownership has involved strengthening the institutional role of the African Union (AU) and its Peace and Security Council, while also operationalizing components of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), such as AU PSC, Peace Fund, Panel of the Wise, the African Standby Force (ASF), and the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS).[32] Enhancing the participation and capacity of African troops—who often possess critical contextual knowledge and regional legitimacy—has also become a strategic priority. These developments underscore a broader paradigm shift toward African-led peace operations, emphasizing regional ownership, strategic autonomy, and effective burden-sharing with international partners such as the UN and the European Union.[33]

The rationale for Africa assuming greater ownership of peacekeeping operations lies in the continent's unique regional expertise and contextual understanding of its complex conflict dynamics.

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[31] *Aning, Kwesi, and Samuel Atuobi. 2011. "Peacekeeping in Africa: The Evolving Roles of the African Union and Regional Mechanisms." African Security Review 20(1): 42–52*; Williams, 2013

[32] *Murithi, Tim. 2009. "The African Union's Evolving Role in Peace Operations: The African Union Mission in Burundi, the African Union Mission in Sudan and the African Union Mission in Somalia." African Security Review 18(1): 70–82*; De Coning, Gelot, & Karlsrud, 2016

[33] *Gelot, Linnéa, and Cedric de Coning, 2020.*

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African actors are often better positioned to grasp the underlying historical, political, and socio-cultural causes of conflict within their respective regions, making them more effective in crafting and implementing responsive peace strategies.[34] Moreover, African leadership in peace operations fosters a more profound sense of ownership and accountability among states and communities, thereby reinforcing the legitimacy and sustainability of peacebuilding efforts. Strengthening African-led operations also contributes to institutional development by enhancing the operational capacity of regional mechanisms such as the African Standby Force and the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), thereby reducing long-term dependence on external actors.[35] Ultimately, this approach promotes both regional stability and Africa's credibility as a responsible actor in the international security arena.

In alignment with this vision, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) adopted Resolution 2719 in December 2023, marking a historic milestone in UN–AU cooperation. The resolution provides a framework for predictable, sustainable financing for African Union-led peace support operations (AUPSOs) that the Security Council authorizes. By endorsing this initiative, the UN acknowledged the need to empower the AU to lead peacekeeping interventions in Africa while ensuring international oversight, human rights compliance, and financial accountability.[36] The establishment of AUPSOs under this resolution signifies a critical step toward fulfilling Africa's long-standing aspiration for self-

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[34] *Adebajo, Adekeye. 2010. UN Peacekeeping in Africa: From the Suez Crisis to the Sudan Conflicts. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers*; Murithi, 2011
[35] Williams, 2019
[36] *United Nations Security Council. 2023. Resolution 2719*

determined, African-led solutions to peace and security challenges. When the Security Council adopted Resolution 2719 in December 2023, expectations were high that it would enhance collaboration between the African Union (AU) and the UN. The resolution outlines a framework for funding AU-led peace support efforts through UN-assessed contributions on a case-by-case basis. It acknowledges that neither the AU nor the UN can attain peace and security alone, emphasizing the importance of collective action. When implemented effectively, this approach could offer both entities opportunities to bolster their roles in promoting peace and resolving conflicts during a period of challenges.[37]

Africa is not only the largest host of peacekeeping missions but also an emerging driver of innovation, leadership, and reform in international peace operations. While the continent continues to experience complex, protracted conflicts, it has also become a testing ground for new approaches to peacebuilding and conflict management. Today, global peacekeeping faces mounting pressures—including operational overstretch, financial constraints, and an erosion of legitimacy due to limited effectiveness in some missions. In this shifting landscape, the African Union (AU) is increasingly positioned to play a central role in redefining the future of peace operations, both within Africa and in shaping global peacekeeping norms. Drawing on its growing operational experience, political legitimacy, and emphasis on African-led solutions, the AU is advancing more context-specific, regionally anchored, and sustainable models of peacekeeping. These models aim to enhance responsiveness to local dynamics, promote burden-sharing, and improve long-term stability across the continent[38].

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[37] *International Peace Institute, 2025*
[38] *Amani Africa. 2024.*

The emergence of African-led Peace Support Operations (PSOs) underscores the continent's growing agency and determination in confronting complex, multidimensional security threats. These operations have become particularly vital in contexts where United Nations peacekeeping missions are absent, in decline, or lack the political will or operational flexibility to respond effectively. Increasingly, African states and regional institutions are assuming the role of first responders to crises involving insurgencies, terrorism, and transnational organized crime—threats that are often deeply rooted in localized dynamics and require rapid, context-sensitive interventions. Missions such as the African Union Support Mission in Somalia (AUSSOM), which succeeds AMISOM and ATMIS, exemplify this shift toward African-led security frameworks. AUSSOM reflects a growing confidence and capability within the African Union and its member states to lead and manage complex operations with regional legitimacy and ownership.[39] While challenges in capacity, coordination, and financing remain, the trajectory of African-led PSOs signals a significant evolution in the continent's role, from a passive recipient of international peacekeeping to an active architect of its security solutions.

5. State of Somalia's Political and Security Situation

Somalia continues to be affected by a complex interplay of political fragility and protracted insecurity, posing persistent challenges to state-building and regional stability. While recent years have witnessed

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[39] Tchie, 2024

efforts by the Federal Government to strengthen governance structures and expand territorial control, significant security threats—most notably from Al-Shabaab—continue to undermine these initiatives. At the same time, tensions between the federal government and federal member states mark Somalia's evolving political landscape. Moreover, the contested reforms aimed at transitioning from a clan-based power-sharing model to a more democratic electoral system have become additional issues of political contention. The involvement of a diverse array of external actors further complicates these internal dynamics, whose strategic interests and uncoordinated engagements have introduced additional layers of complexity. One of the longest-lasting international peacekeeping operations was implemented in Somalia. The transition from AMISOM to ATMIS and, now, to AUSSOM, without achieving a breakthrough on the ground, necessitates an assessment of Somalia's overall political and security landscape. This section examines the current security landscape, external interventions, and the implications of planned political reforms, aiming to highlight the challenges and opportunities shaping Somalia's state-building trajectory.

6-1 Current security landscape

Al-Shabab, an Islamist militant group affiliated with Al-Qaeda, remains a significant security threat in Somalia.[40] Despite concerted efforts by the Somali Federal Government (SFG) and international forces, Al-Shabab controls vast swathes of rural areas, particularly in southern and central Somalia. The group's

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[40] *Menkhaus, K. (2022). "Understanding Al-Shabab's Resilience." Journal of Terrorism Studies.*

direct control extends to regions in Jubaland, Hirshabelle, South West State, and parts of Galmudug.[41]

These areas serve as operational bases for Al-Shabab's military activities, revenue collection, and

recruitment.

Beyond direct control, Al-Shabab wields considerable *indirect influence* in territories ostensibly

under government control. Through extortion, threats, and infiltration of local governance structures, the

group exerts power over businesses, local communities, and even some government officials.[42] The

group's ability to collect taxes and enforce its own judicial system highlights the depth of its indirect

influence, even in major cities like Mogadishu.

The *Somalia Federal Government* (SFG) controls key urban centers, including Mogadishu,

Kismayo, Baidoa, and parts of Beledweyne. However, the government's effective control is often limited

to these cities and their immediate surroundings. In rural areas, SFG authority diminishes, with security

provided primarily by clan militias and international forces such as ATMIS (the African Union Transition

Mission in Somalia).[43] The *Somali National Army (SNA)* has made progress in recent years, but it

remains heavily dependent on international support. The SNA struggles with issues of professionalism,

corruption, and resource constraints. Consequently, the SFG's ability to hold liberated areas is limited,

and Al-Shabab often regains control after government forces withdraw.

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[41] International Crisis Group. 2023. *Sustaining Gains in Somalia's Offensive against Al-Shabaab*. Africa Briefing No. 187, March 21. Brussels: International Crisis Group

[42] Hiraal Institute. 2021. *Al-Shabab's Influence and Governance Practices in Southern Somalia*. Mogadishu: Hiraal Institute.

[43] Williams, 2021

The mistrust and tense relations between the Federal Government and State Administrations have severely undermined Somalia's security and political stability.[44] The federal system in Somalia is fragile, with ongoing disputes over power-sharing, resource allocation, and authority. States such as Jubaland, Puntland, and Galmudug have frequently clashed with the central government over issues of autonomy and governance.[45] This mistrust hampers joint security operations and allows Al-Shabab to exploit political divisions. For example, state administrations often pursue their own security strategies, which may conflict with federal objectives. In some cases, local militias aligned with state governments have refused to cooperate with federal forces, further complicating efforts to combat Al-Shabab.

6-2 Involvement of External Actors in Somalia's Security Landscape

The engagement of regional and international actors in Somalia has added layers of complexity to the country's already fragile security environment. These actors often intervene to promote peace and stability, though their involvement sometimes produces unintended consequences. For example, Ethiopia and Kenya, Somalia's immediate neighbors, have long-standing security interests, particularly in countering cross-border threats posed by extremist groups. While their presence has contributed to regional counterterrorism efforts, it has also elicited mixed reactions in Somalia, at times leading to

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[44] Good Governance Africa, 2025 https://gga.org/federal-feud-escalating-tensions-between-somalias-federal-government-and-jubaland/#_edn2

[45] International Crisis Group, 2023

mistrust among specific local stakeholders.[46]

Whereas Egypt and Eritrea's growing involvement in Somalia reflects a temporary alignment aimed at counterbalancing Ethiopia's regional influence, particularly through a tripartite arrangement often described as minilateralism.[47] Egypt's engagement is primarily driven by its concern over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), with Somalia's strategic location near the Red Sea and the Horn of Africa providing a platform to exert pressure on Ethiopia. Cairo's support for Somalia is not only geopolitical but also symbolic, intended to demonstrate to its domestic audience that Egypt is actively defending its interests in the Nile Basin by expanding its regional partnerships.[48] Eritrea, on the other hand, has its motivations rooted in long-standing political tensions and border conflicts with Ethiopia. By deepening ties with Somalia and aligning with Egypt, Eritrea seeks to retain leverage over Ethiopian internal affairs. Although the tension between Somalia and Ethiopia has eased following the Ankara declaration, Somalia's interest in Egypt and Eritrea stems from Ethiopia's closer ties with autonomous Somaliland, which Somalia considers part of its sovereign territory.[49] This convergence of interests has led to security and diplomatic cooperation among the three states, raising concerns about the further regionalization of internal Horn conflicts and the erosion of collective security mechanisms.[50]

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[46] Cannon, Brendon J., and Ash Rossiter. "Patterns of external involvement in the modern political history of the Horn of Africa states." In *The Gulf States and the Horn of Africa*, pp. 15-35. Manchester University Press, 2022.

[47] AFRICA File. 2024. "Africa File, October 17, 2024: Egypt-Eritrea-Somalia Summit; Challenges with Tigray Peace Process." Institute for the Study of War.

[48] Geopolitical Monitor. 2024. "The Eritrea-Egypt-Somalia Alliance: A Strategic Counterbalance to Ethiopia."

[49] Reuters. 2024. "Egypt, Eritrea and Somalia Agree to Boost Security Cooperation." October 10.

[50] Reuters 2024; Geopolitical Monitor 2024

Besides, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Qatar have played active roles in Somalia through development partnerships and political engagement. However, their competing interests have at times led to parallel support for different actors, unintentionally deepening internal divisions and complicating national reconciliation efforts.[51] The United States and the European Union have provided critical support through financial aid, capacity-building, and counterterrorism assistance. Nonetheless, some observers argue that these engagements have often prioritized immediate security objectives over long-term institutional development and state-building.[52]

While these external partnerships are often well-intentioned, they can sometimes reflect differing strategic priorities. In some instances, interventions have bypassed federal institutions, inadvertently empowering local actors at the expense of central cohesion.[53] Moving forward, a more coordinated, Somalia-led approach to external engagement may be essential to building a stable and unified state.

7 Planned Political Reform and Its Implications

The Federal Government of Somalia, under the leadership of President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, has recently renewed efforts to transition toward a "one-person, one-vote" electoral model—a notable shift

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[51] International Crisis Group, 2023
[52] Williams, 2021
[53] Kapteijns, 2021

from the long-standing clan-based power-sharing arrangement. While the reform initiative is framed as a step toward consolidating democratic governance and enhancing political inclusivity, it has elicited mixed reactions among domestic stakeholders and external observers.[54]

One frequently cited concern pertains to the potential marginalization of influential clans. Somalia's 4.5 power-sharing formula, though widely critiqued, has historically contributed to fragile political stability by accommodating diverse clan interests. Departing from this framework could generate tensions, particularly among traditional leaders who have played a central role in local governance and conflict resolution.[55] Moreover, questions have been raised regarding the timing and practical feasibility of such a transition. Given the persistent security threats posed by insurgent groups and the weak administrative infrastructure in some regions, the federal government may face considerable logistical and security challenges in ensuring the integrity and inclusiveness of a nationwide electoral process. In the absence of a broad-based consensus, there is also concern that electoral reforms may provoke resistance from armed local actors, potentially escalating into localized violence. The politicization of electoral timelines and processes without adequate consultation could undermine fragile trust among stakeholders and complicate ongoing stabilization efforts[56].

Nonetheless, if implemented in a phased, inclusive manner, the proposed reforms may

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[54] *Good Governance Africa. 2025. "Federal Feud: Escalating Tensions Between Somalia's Federal Government and Jubaland." Good Governance Africa.* https://gga.org/federal-feud-escalating-tensions-between-somalias-federal-government-and-jubaland.

[55] Khalif, Abdulkadir. 2025. "Somalia Pushes for Direct Elections—but Must Win Over Its Critics First." *The East African*, July 13; Reuters. 2024. "Somalia's Cabinet Approves Bill for Universal Suffrage." *Reuters*, August 8.

[56] Khalifa 2025; ICG, 2023

meaningfully contribute to Somalia's democratic development. A shift toward a universal suffrage system holds the potential to strengthen state legitimacy, foster political accountability, and diminish the entrenched influence of clan-based patronage networks.[57] Furthermore, the pursuit of direct elections may be viewed favorably by international development partners, many of whom have emphasized governance reform as a prerequisite for long-term support. Aligning Somalia's political trajectory with democratic norms could thus facilitate enhanced technical assistance and donor confidence.[58]

8. Post-ATMIS Peacekeeping Transition in Somalia: Test for 2719/23?

Since the adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2719 (2023)—a landmark decision aimed at ensuring predictable, sustainable, and flexible financing for African Union-led peace support operations (AUPSOs) authorized by the Security Council—several potential test cases have emerged for its operationalization. Among these, Somalia presents the most compelling and immediate opportunity for applying the resolution. With the phased drawdown of the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) set to conclude by the end of 2024, the transition to its successor, the African Union Support Mission in Somalia (AUSSOM), represents a critical juncture for both the AU and UN.[59] Somalia exhibits

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[57] International IDEA. 2024. *The Global State of Democracy: Somalia Country Profile*. Stockholm: International IDEA

[58] Khalif, Abdulkadir. 2025. "Somalia Pushes for Direct Elections—but Must Win Over Its Critics First." *The East African*, July 13, 2025. theeastafrican.co.ke

[59] Amani Africa, 2024; De Coning & Gelot, 2024

several enabling conditions identified by the UN and AU, including an existing partnership framework, a functioning host government, and a shared strategic vision for continued engagement in the fight against Al-Shabaab.

As a potential first test case for Resolution 2719, Somalia's transition provides an opportunity to implement a fully AU-led mission with predictable funding mechanisms, while maintaining international oversight and adherence to human rights and accountability standards.[60] The transition also aligns with Somalia's Federal Government priorities to gradually assume national security responsibilities by 2025, as outlined in its Somali Transition Plan and the AU–UN joint reconfiguration strategy.[61]

Other contexts, such as Sudan, remain unlikely candidates in the short term due to ongoing hostilities and the absence of a political settlement or ceasefire agreement. The fragile situation on the ground, marked by widespread humanitarian suffering and fragmented military and political actors, precludes the establishment of a stable peace support mission under UN auspices.[62] Likewise, although security conditions in the Sahel region—particularly Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger—have deteriorated significantly, the current geopolitical fragmentation, weak regional cohesion, and withdrawal of MINUSMA complicate any coordinated international deployment under a 2719 framework.[63]

Nevertheless, these cases remain under close consideration. The AU and its regional economic

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[60] Tchie, 2024; UNSC, 2024
[61] United Nations. 2024. *Report of the Secretary-General on the Situation in Somalia (S/2024/698)*. New York: United Nations Security Council, 27 September 2024.
[62] ICG, 2024
[63] Williams, 2024; Crisis Group, 2024

communities (RECs) have expressed interest in applying the 2719 model to regional response frameworks, particularly in the Sahel and Lake Chad Basin. However, the success of such an application depends on further clarification of the financing model, operational standards, and joint strategic planning mechanisms. Thus, Somalia's post-ATMIS phase—anchored in AU leadership and UN-enabling support—will likely serve as the foundational test of whether Resolution 2719 can fulfill its intended goal of empowering credible, accountable, and African-led peacekeeping responses to evolving security threats.[64]

The transition from the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) to the proposed African Union Stabilization Support for Somalia (AUSSOM) presents a pivotal moment for Somalia's security trajectory and the broader regional peace and governance architecture. This handover raises critical concerns regarding the capacity of national and regional actors to prevent a security vacuum that could be exploited by Al-Shabaab, which remains a persistent and adaptive threat. The premature or poorly coordinated withdrawal of ATMIS could severely weaken security gains achieved over the past decade, thereby exacerbating Somalia's fragility and undermining efforts at state-building and political reconciliation[65]. Moreover, the repercussions of renewed insecurity in Somalia would not remain contained within its borders. Neighboring states—particularly Kenya and Ethiopia—face heightened vulnerability due to the porous nature of regional borders and the interconnected challenges of terrorism,

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[64] African Union & United Nations. 2023. *Outcome of the Consultative Meeting Between the AU and UN Task Teams on UNSCR 2719*, Addis Ababa, May 23–24, 2024.
[65] Robinson, Colin. 2024. "As ATMIS Looks to Withdraw, the Risk of Large-Scale al-Shabaab Success in Southern Somalia Is High." *The Global Observatory*, December 10.

arms trafficking, refugee flows, and disrupted trade routes.[66]

In addition to its regional implications, the post-ATMIS transition carries significant global stakes. The credibility of international peacekeeping frameworks hinges on the ability of the United Nations, the African Union, and bilateral partners to design and support a viable and accountable successor mission. Failure to establish an effective post-ATMIS stabilization mechanism would not only risk a reversal of hard-won progress in Somalia but also undermine the international community's efforts to support Somalia's stability. However, it could also erode confidence in multilateral peace operations, particularly at a time when global peacekeeping is already under scrutiny due to funding shortages, overstretch, and contested legitimacy. As such, the Somalia case represents both a litmus test for the operationalization of UNSC Resolution 2719 (2023) and a broader measure of the international community's commitment to sustaining peace in fragile contexts.[67]

The proposed African Union Stabilization Support Mission in Somalia (AUSSOM) has encountered considerable obstacles that threaten to derail a smooth and effective transition from ATMIS. Chief among these challenges is the absence of a clearly defined mandate, which has created operational ambiguity and hindered strategic planning. Compounding this is a persistent lack of predictable, sustainable financing, despite recent progress under UNSC Resolution 2719 (2023). Coordination deficits between the African Union, the Somali Federal Government (SFG), and key international donors have

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[66] Georgetown University Institute for the Study of International Peace. 2024. "The Post-African Union Transition Mission in Somalia and Its Regional Security Implications." *GJIA*, July 30

[67] Amani Africa, 2024; De Coning & Gelot, 2024

further hampered mission design and implementation, creating gaps in leadership, communication, and accountability. Delays in the official deployment timeline and uncertainty around the command structure have deepened stakeholder concerns and risk undermining confidence in the mission's viability.[68]

Meanwhile, the United States' abstention from a recent UN Security Council vote on Somalia signals broader strategic hesitation, reflecting frustrations with the SFG's limited progress on institutional reforms and the absence of a cohesive national security framework.[69] Against this backdrop, Al-Shabaab continues to demonstrate resilience and adaptability, exploiting local grievances, inter-clan divisions, and fragile governance to sustain its insurgency and expand its influence. Addressing these interlocking challenges will require more than a military-centric response. A long-term strategy must include Somali-led security sector reform, inclusive political reconciliation, enhanced regional cooperation, and socioeconomic investment to dismantle the structural drivers of conflict and reduce the country's prolonged dependence on external peacekeeping forces. Only through such a comprehensive, multidimensional approach can Somalia move toward a self-sustaining peace and reclaim national sovereignty over its security trajectory.[70]

The UN Security Council, through Resolution 2767 (2024), endorsed the transition from the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) to the African Union Support and Stabilization

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[68] Amani Africa. 2025. "Update Briefing on the Status and Operations of the AU Support and Stabilisation Mission in Somalia (AUSSOM)." Amani Africa Policy Brief, July 2025; ISS Africa. 2025. "Funding for Somalia's New AU Mission Hangs in the Balance." *ISS Today*, April 2025.

[69] Security Council Report. 2024. "Somalia: Vote on a Draft Resolution." *What's In Blue*, December.

[70] European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA). 2025. *Somalia: Security Situation*. Bruxelles: EUAA; Jackson, Ashley. 2025. "Flailing State: The Resurgence of al-Shabaab in Somalia." *War on the Rocks*, June 3; Williams, 2024; Tchie, 2024

Mission in Somalia (AUSSOM), authorizing African Union members to support Somali forces in combating Al-Shabaab for 12 months, starting in January 2025. The resolution includes a "hybrid" financing model, allowing up to 75% of AUSSOM's budget to be funded through UN-assessed contributions. In comparison, the remaining 25% will be covered by the African Union and other partners. The resolution emphasizes the importance of predictable, sustainable funding for African-led peacekeeping missions and the gradual transfer of security responsibilities to Somali forces. Despite broad support for the financing model, the United States abstained, citing concerns that the proposed framework would exceed the intended scope of UN contributions. Somalia and various nations, including Ethiopia and European Council members, welcomed the decision as a critical step towards enhancing stability and preventing a security vacuum in the region, while Russia criticized Western financial priorities.[71]

The U.S. stance on UNSCR 2719 (2023) and the African Union Support and Stabilization Mission in Somalia (AUSSOM) shows a mix of rhetorical backing and cautious pragmatism: Washington publicly supports consistent funding for AU-led peace operations and recognizes Africa's growing security role, but it abstained from voting due to concerns about financial accountability, oversight, and the preliminary application of the resolution Somalia. These concerns extend to questions about mission clarity. Whether AUSSOM's counterinsurgency profile fits traditional peacekeeping suitable for UN-assessed funding, reinforcing long-standing U.S. preferences for maintaining tighter control through bilateral or voluntary

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[71] United Nations Security Council. 2024. *Resolution 2767 (2024): The Situation in Somalia*. S/RES/2767 (2024), adopted December 21, 2024. https://undocs.org/S/RES/2767(2024).

contributions—an approach further strengthened during the Trump administration's "America First" era, which prioritized unilateral counterterrorism actions over multilateral engagement.[72] As a major UN contributor and permanent Security Council member, the U.S.'s ongoing hesitation could delay the rollout of the 2719 financing model and limit its effectiveness in Somalia and other regions. This highlights a broader contradiction between U.S. support for African agency and its reluctance to relinquish financial and operational control. This imbalance risks undermining the potential of Resolution 2719 and prolonging reliance on temporary donor mechanisms. The European Union remains the leading external supporter of AU-led peacekeeping efforts in Somalia, providing ongoing funding for troop stipends, logistics, and institutional assistance for over a decade. This support has maintained AU deployments and bolstered stabilization efforts under AUSSOM as security duties gradually transition to Somali authorities. Currently, however, the EU is pushing for a multilateral mechanism to support AUSSOM and focusing on other priorities than Somalia.

The African Union Support and Stabilization Mission in Somalia (AUSSOM) marks a bold step toward African-led peace enforcement. Its early achievements, such as coordinated military operations and enhanced territorial control alongside Somali forces, signal potential for improved regional security ownership. The political backing of the AU Peace and Security Council and the gradual mobilization of troop-contributing countries underscore a willingness to operationalize UNSC Resolutions 2719 and 2767. However, without a clear mandate, sufficient financing, and effective coordination among stakeholders,

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[72] Pass Blue, 2025

these gains remain fragile.

To ensure long-term success, AUSSOM must overcome persistent logistical and financial constraints, harmonize divergent national interests among troop-contributing countries, and align military efforts with Somalia's political stabilization agenda. This includes supporting inclusive governance, accelerating security sector reform, and fostering socioeconomic recovery. AUSSOM's credibility will ultimately depend on whether it delivers sustained peace dividends while avoiding the pitfalls of past missions—namely, dependency, fragmentation, and premature withdrawal. For Somalia and the AU, this mission is both a litmus test of regional leadership and a defining moment for reshaping African peacekeeping autonomy.

9. Conclusion

Peacekeeping in Africa is at a pivotal point, with the continent seeking greater influence over its security efforts. The adoption of UNSC Resolution 2719 (2023) marks an important, though debated, step toward establishing African-led peace support operations. It facilitates stable UN-funded assistance and officially acknowledges the African Union's (AU) strategic importance, aiming to strengthen regional legitimacy, accountability, and human rights adherence in peacekeeping. Nonetheless, as a key UN financial supporter, persistent US reluctance and opposition could hinder the implementation of the 2719 funding approach and diminish its effectiveness in Somalia. This reveals a tension between peace-supporting African agency and the need to maintain control over funding and operations, ultimately

constraining the resolution's potential for transformation.

To turn Resolution 2719's goals into lasting results, Africa needs to strengthen institutional capacity, unify doctrines, and improve operational oversight. The AU's leadership must prevent peacekeeping from becoming politicized, ensuring troop contributions serve regional priorities rather than narrow national interests. The example of Somalia, especially the shift from ATMIS to AUSSOM, highlights both the potential and challenges of African-led peace missions. While AUSSOM could serve as a model of African strategic independence, its success depends on inclusive political agreements, effective federal and state cooperation, reforms in the security sector, and the social and economic empowerment of youth and women. Without these, military efforts alone will fall short.

Somalia's highly fragile landscape, heavily influenced by Al-Shabaab's control over territory and society, requires more than just military measures. Effective strategies should combine long-term state reconstruction, local governance reforms, and a phased introduction of electoral changes, like the proposed move to a one-person, one-vote system. If reforms are poorly timed or coordinated, they could worsen political divisions instead of resolving them. Additionally, the presence of external actors with differing interests continues to complicate peace efforts, highlighting the importance of regional ownership and consistent international support.

AUSSOM's deployment alone can't resolve Somalia's complex conflict. A sustainable solution needs a comprehensive approach beyond military presence, including political settlement, inclusive governance, and institution-building, especially training Somalia's defense forces. AUSSOM should have advanced tech like combat aircraft and drones, as conventional tactics are ineffective against Al-

Shabaab's hit-and-run tactics. Civic education, livelihood programs, and empowering youth and women are vital to reduce extremist recruitment and encourage disengagement. Relying only on conventional troops and outdated tactics risks prolonging violence and dependence on international aid, instead of helping Somalia achieve peace. The future of African peace building depends on a political, institutional, and strategic shift—focused on African-led, credible efforts rooted in sovereignty and responsibility, guided by Resolution 2719 and the African Peace and Security Architecture.

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