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إفريقيا وتحديات القرن الواحد والعشرين

**Interrogating Regional Security Arrangements in Africa:
*The Case of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA)***

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Abstract

With the re-vitalization of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) through the African Union (AU), a new security regime to respond to the post-Cold War security challenges in Africa was born. Known as the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), it is designed to respond holistically to peace and security concerns on the continent through conflict prevention, management and post conflict peace building. The architecture is made up of the AU Commission, a Panel of the Wise, a Continental Early Warning System (CEWS), an African Standby Force (ASF) as well as the Special Fund. While the architecture has its origins in the defunct OAU, APSA has however been radically transformed to respond holistically to new threats to peace and security on the continent. This is especially urgent given the United Nation's recent failures in the face of some of Africa's most profound security challenges including the genocide in Rwanda, conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Liberia and currently Somalia.

While APSA is a commendable and laudable effort by Africa to provide "African solutions to African problems," there are a number of concerns regarding its sustainability and ownership. Other than the ASF and CEWS, the rest of the components are way behind their implementation schedules. Further, coordination by the AU Commission among the various regional organizations and mechanisms, the bedrock of the architecture remains a daunting challenge while international interests in APSA seem to be setting the agenda of its operationalization. In the face of these mounting challenges, this paper will explore whether APSA can still deliver on its promise of peace and security to the people of Africa.