



A MILITARY AFRICA
REPORT

Advancing African Defence Cooperation in the Face of Global Security Uncertainties





Executive Summary:

African countries face numerous security challenges, ranging from terrorism and violent extremism to piracy and transnational organized crime. In the face of these security uncertainties, African defence cooperation has become a critical need to effectively address these challenges.

This report explores how African countries can advance their defence cooper-



Introduction:

African countries face multifaceted security threats that require concerted efforts to effectively address. These threats include terrorism and violent extremism, cross-border organized crime, illicit trafficking of drugs and arms, cyber threats, maritime piracy, and conflicts over resources, among others.

Moreover, the global security landscape has become more complex and uncertain, with emerging threats such as hybrid warfare, geopolitical rivalries, and technological disruptions. In this context, African countries need to enhance their defence cooperation to effectively respond to these security challenges.

Regional and Continental Cooperation: Regional and continental cooperation are crucial for advancing African defence cooperation. Africa has several regional and continental organizations, such as the African Union (AU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and the East African Community (EAC), among others, that provide frameworks for promoting security cooperation among member states.

These organizations have made significant efforts to foster regional and continental security cooperation through various mechanisms, including joint

ation efforts to enhance their collective security in the face of global security uncertainties.

The report highlights the importance of regional and continental cooperation, identifies key challenges and opportunities, and provides recommendations to strengthen African defence cooperation.

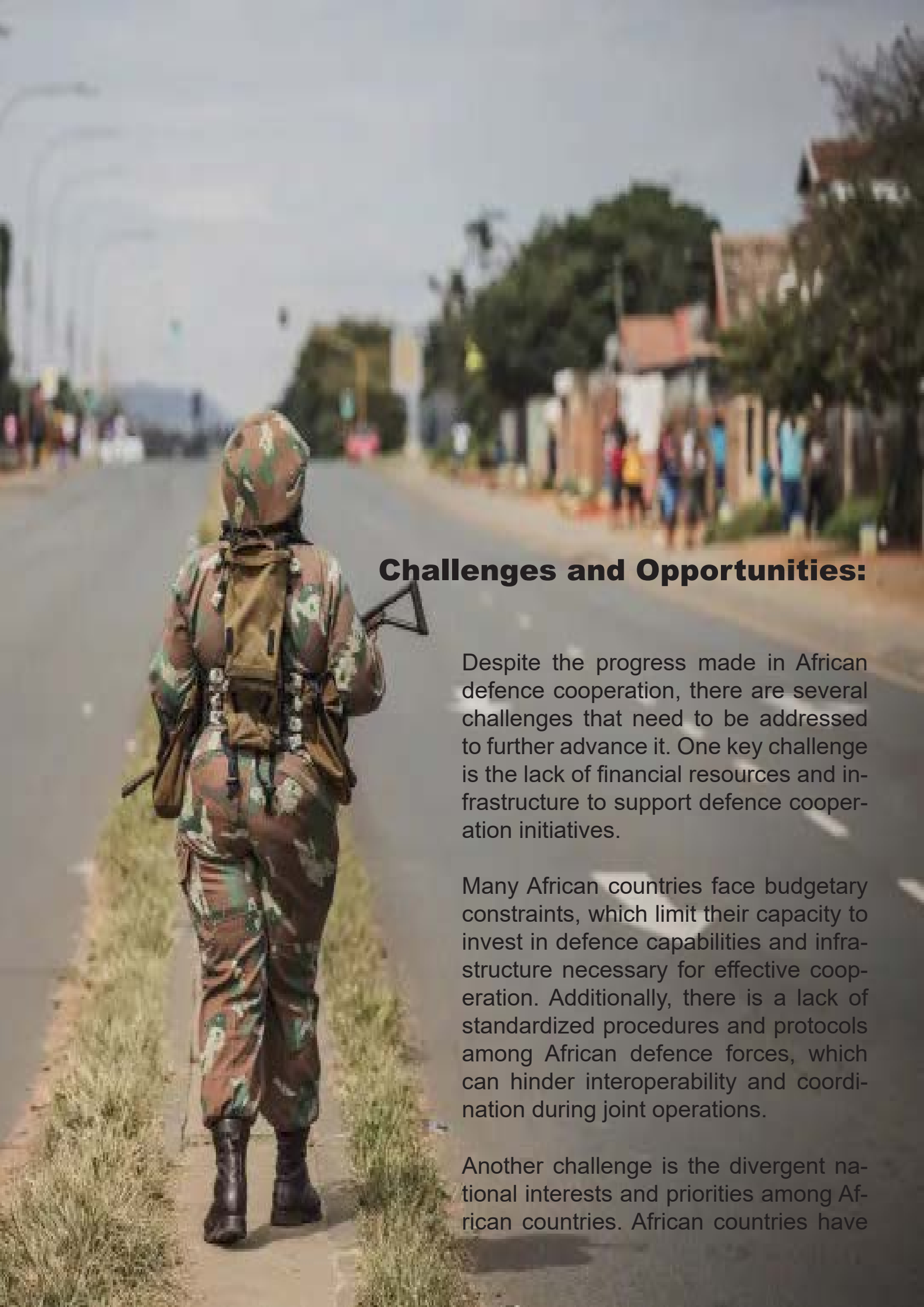


military exercises, intelligence sharing, and mutual assistance pacts.

For example, the African Union's African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) is a comprehensive framework that encompasses conflict prevention, management, and resolution. APSA includes the African Standby Force (ASF), a regional force that is meant to be rapidly deployable to address crises in Africa. The ASF has made progress in building its capabilities, but faces challenges related to funding, training, and coordination among member

states.

Similarly, regional organizations such as ECOWAS have deployed peacekeeping missions to address crises in countries like Mali, Guinea-Bissau, and Sierra Leone, demonstrating the potential of regional cooperation in addressing security challenges. Additionally, regional organizations have made efforts to harmonize policies, norms, and procedures, which can facilitate interoperability and cooperation among member states.



Challenges and Opportunities:

Despite the progress made in African defence cooperation, there are several challenges that need to be addressed to further advance it. One key challenge is the lack of financial resources and infrastructure to support defence cooperation initiatives.

Many African countries face budgetary constraints, which limit their capacity to invest in defence capabilities and infrastructure necessary for effective cooperation. Additionally, there is a lack of standardized procedures and protocols among African defence forces, which can hinder interoperability and coordination during joint operations.

Another challenge is the divergent national interests and priorities among African countries. African countries have

different security challenges and perceive threats differently, which can sometimes result in divergent interests and priorities. This can complicate efforts to reach consensus and coordination on defence cooperation initiatives. Moreover, geopolitical rivalries and competition among external powers for influence in Africa can also impact African defence cooperation efforts, sometimes creating divisions and undermining regional and continental initiatives.

Despite these challenges, there are also opportunities for advancing African defence cooperation. African countries can leverage their collective strength through regional and continental organizations to pool their resources and capabilities for mutual benefit. This can include joint procurement of defence equipment, sharing of intelligence and information, and coordination of military operations. Additionally, advances in technology, such as in the areas of cybersecurity, surveillance, and communication, can provide new opportunities for enhancing African defence cooperation.



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Recommendations:

Based on the analysis of the challenges and opportunities, the following recommendations are proposed to advance African defence cooperation in the face of global security uncertainties:

Strengthening Financial Resources and Infrastructure:

African countries should prioritize allocating adequate financial resources for defence cooperation initiatives. This includes investing in modern defence capabilities, improving infrastructure, and enhancing logistics and communication networks. African countries should also explore partnerships with international actors, such as development banks and donor countries, to secure funding for joint defence projects and infrastructure development.

Enhancing Interoperability and Standardization:

African countries should work towards harmonizing policies, norms, and procedures to ensure interoperability and coordination among their defence forces.

This includes standardizing communication protocols, training exercises, and joint operational procedures. African countries can also establish joint training centers and institutions to enhance the capacity and capabilities of their defence forces.

Fostering Political Will and Leadership:

African leaders should demonstrate political will and commitment to advancing defence cooperation initiatives. This includes prioritizing defence cooperation in their national security agendas and promoting a shared understanding of security threats and priorities among African countries. African leaders should also engage in high-level diplomacy and advocacy to promote African defence cooperation at regional, continental, and international forums.

Strengthening Regional and Continental Organizations:

African regional and continental organizations, such as the AU, ECOWAS,



SADC, and EAC, should be strengthened to effectively coordinate and implement defence cooperation initiatives. This includes enhancing the capacity of regional organizations to plan, coordinate, and deploy joint military operations, as well as improving mechanisms for intelligence sharing, information exchange, and mutual assistance. Regional organizations should also facilitate dialogue and mediation efforts to resolve conflicts among member states and promote regional security.

Leveraging Technology and Innovation:

African countries should leverage technological advancements to enhance their defence cooperation efforts. This includes investing in cybersecurity capabilities, surveillance systems, and communication networks to improve situational awareness, intelligence gathering, and information sharing. African countries should also promote innovation in defence industries, research, and development to build indigenous defence capabilities and reduce dependency on foreign sources.



Strengthening Partnerships:

African countries should foster partnerships with external actors, including other regional and international organizations, to support their defence cooperation initiatives. This includes engaging with strategic partners, such as the United Nations, European Union, and other African countries with advanced defence capabilities, to share expertise, resources, and best practices. African countries should also engage with non-traditional partners, such as emerging powers and private sector entities, to explore innovative approaches to defence cooperation.

Investing in Human Capital:

African countries should invest in the professional development of their defence personnel to enhance their skills, knowledge, and expertise. This includes providing regular training, education, and professional exchanges among African defence forces to foster a common understanding of defence concepts, doctrines, and practices. African countries should also promote gender mainstreaming in defence institutions and initiatives, including increasing the representation of women in leadership roles.





Conclusion:

In conclusion, African defence cooperation is essential to effectively address the security challenges faced by African countries in the face of global security uncertainties. Regional and continental organizations play a crucial role in fostering defence cooperation, but face challenges that need to be addressed.

By strengthening financial resources and infrastructure, enhancing interoperability, fostering political will and leadership, strengthening regional and continental organizations, leveraging technology and innovation, strengthening partnerships, and investing in human capital, African countries can advance their defence cooperation efforts and enhance their collective security.

It requires sustained commitment, coordination, and collaboration among African countries, regional and continental organizations, and external partners to effectively address the security uncertainties facing Africa and ensure a peaceful and secure future for the continent.

