

IMAGINING A COMMUNITY — THE AFRICAN UNION AS AN EMERGING SECURITY COMMUNITY

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ABSTRACT

This article presents an evaluation of the African Union which is to be formally established in July 2002. The concept of a security community as originally developed by Karl Deutsch and his associates during the 1950s is utilised, focusing on more recent developments in the scholarship on this topic. The concept was not used much during the Cold War era, but has gained renewed attention since the early 1990s as a process through which regions can build peace and security. It is concluded that the African Union can be defined as an emerging security community under the leadership of a group of revisionist states, but that these states are facing a number of internal threats that might inhibit their participation in the community building process. Furthermore, the counter-revisionist group led by Libya might also thwart the realisation of the key objectives of the new organisation in the absence of strong leadership by democratic states on the continent.

1. INTRODUCTION

We continually create the world we desire, and deserve the world we get.¹⁾

On 26 May 2001 the *Constitutive Act of the African Union* entered into force. The organisation that is to succeed the Organisation of African

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Unity (OAU) is scheduled become operative in July 2002 and the year in between the last summit meeting of the OAU in Lusaka in July 2001 and the first summit of the African Union (AU) scheduled to be held in July 2002 sees the transition during which the modalities for the operationalisation of the AU are worked out. In terms of the *Constitutive Act* (CA) the AU is constituted by three pillars — partnership with civil society,²⁾ the promotion of peace, security and stability on the continent³⁾ and socio-economic integration with a view to sustainable development.⁴⁾ The pursuit of the latter two goals will be facilitated by the Conference on Security, Stability and Development Co-operation in Africa (CSSDCA) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), formerly known as the Millennium Africa Plan (MAP)/New Africa Initiative (NAI).⁵⁾

Given the goals and objectives of the AU, summarised in its "common vision of a united and strong Africa", an analysis and evaluation of the new organisation is called for in order to assess the prospects for "bridging the implementation gap" that might result in an "African Renaissance". The purpose of this article is to provide such an analysis and assessment with a view to the prospects of the AU and to identify potential problem-areas that might need further investigation or action by political leaders and decision-makers. Accordingly a very brief overview is provided of the main reasons for the transformation of the OAU into the AU, followed by the utilisation of the concept of "security communities" in order to evaluate the AU. The article also points to a number of shortcomings in the framework that is applied for studying the AU as an emerging security community and provides some suggestions as to the refinement of the framework for studying security communities in the developing world.

2. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The founding fathers⁶⁾ of the AU were at pains to emphasise that the new organisation is not merely a continuation of the OAU by a different name.⁷⁾ Rather, the OAU had fulfilled its primary goal of decolonisation and the eradication of racism on the continent and was clearly not the right structure to address contemporary African needs and challenges. The AU in its turn is established to deal with these contemporary continental challenges, trends and opportunities against the background of the global political economy. At its core the new organisation has as its mission the "rebirth" of the continent through the creation and

maintenance of peace and security and the promotion of development.

There are two ways of viewing the establishment of the AU. The first would be to see it as "just another" attempt at creating a rescue plan for the troubled continent, the latest effort in a long line of similar creations. Africa has no doubt been the subject of numerous "rescue plans" since the early 1960s with "solutions" proffered by both local and extra-continental experts, ranging from the OAU to the United Nations (UN), the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Another way of looking at the AU, though, would be to see it within the context of a history of the development of programmes following one on the other in order to respond to particular circumstances or to take advantage of particular conditions on the continent and within the global political economy.

Taking this second perspective, the AU is a further development based on the *Abuja Treaty* and the goal of the establishment of an African Economic Community (AEC) which saw the light in 1991, largely as a response to the end of the Cold War, the impact of globalisation on the continent (together with the debt crisis and the imposition of structural adjustment programmes), and a movement towards democratisation in parts of Africa. The *Abuja Treaty* also resulted in the so-called *Cairo Agenda* adopted in June 1995 by the OAU summit⁸⁾ that distinguished between "the things that Africa can do for itself" and "what it is looking for from development partners in support of these efforts".⁹⁾ In turn, the *Abuja Treaty* was a continuation of the 1980 *Lagos Plan of Action*, an embodiment of the OAU's goal (article 11(2) of its Charter) to establish a politically and economically unified Africa. Apart from reflecting key ideological differences, international trends and continental woes over time, the succession of treaties and agreements starting with the OAU in 1963 and culminating in the *Constitutive Act* of the AU in 2001 points to a search by Africa's political elites for ways and means of moving from rhetoric to implementation. In this sense the AU can be seen as an attempt to "bridge the implementation gap and move from words to deeds".¹⁰⁾

3. SECURITY COMMUNITIES

The concept "security communities" provides a useful lens through which to examine and explore the AU. The essential and abiding characteristic of a security community, according to Karl Deutsch and his

associates, is a group of states integrated to the point where people have "dependable expectations of peaceful change".¹¹⁾ The concept was not much used after the late 1950s and 1960s when idealism suffered a retreat in the face of realism and the Cold War, but throughout the 1970s and 1980s anthropological and sociological literature on community, community building and networking persisted and after the end of the Cold War, academic interest from an international relations perspective started to gain popularity again.

In essence the concept (as originally defined and used) refers to a rather state-centric perspective based on the search for negative peace¹²⁾ between states and it reflected the product of this search from an idealist approach to international relations in the aftermath of the Second World War. European integration, widely considered to be the best example of a successful security community, presented, in the words of Keohane and Nye "a response to opportunity and an expression of hope as much as a response to threat and an expression of fear".¹³⁾ At first glance the concept security community does not seem to be applicable as an analytical tool in the case of analysing African attempts at creating a continent-wide community characterised by civil society participation, peace, security and stability, and sustainable development.¹⁴⁾ After all, war in Africa is mostly of an intra-state nature and one of the main objectives of the AU is to curb instances of intra-state violent conflict and instability in order to build security on the continent.

Furthermore, security communities, traditionally considered to be an almost exclusively Northern phenomenon, were taken to be predicated on the philosophical basis of democratic peace, incorporating liberal economics.¹⁵⁾ These have not been the defining characteristics of developing world security dynamics. However, the concept security community has of late become somewhat broader in its application, particularly due to the refinement of the concept in the work of Adler and Barnett.¹⁶⁾ It allows, in terms of its present conceptualisation (which constitutes an evolutionary approach), to be applied in analyses of attempts at regionalisation in order to, amongst other goals and objectives, deter the "enemy within",¹⁷⁾ to build communities characterised by positive peace and to promote democracy and economic co-operation. In fact, the promotion of democracy and particularly of increased economic interaction has become the rationale for many co-operation efforts in the developing world. At the core of (aspiring) security communities, whether those in the developed or developing world, and despite different

threat perceptions or security dilemmas, lies the existence of a shared identity and mutual trust and a conscious attempt to create and maintain security. The vision of the AU conforms to this ideal in that it aspires to build a "united and strong Africa". The question, though, is to what extent African states in their interactions with each other, their commitment to unity and community at the continental level and their intra-state behaviour actually point to a security community growth-path.

The operationalisation of the concept security community as developed by Adler and Barnett¹⁸⁾ allows for a three-tiered analysis of co-operation efforts within three stages of the development of security communities, namely nascent, ascendant and mature.¹⁹⁾

3.1 Tiers

The defining features of each of the three tiers require brief elucidation for the purposes of this analysis, although a more detailed discussion will follow.

(a) Tier one

The first tier consists of "precipitating conditions" that are necessary to induce closer co-operation. These include changes in technology, demography, economics and the environment, as well as the development of new interpretations of social reality and external threats. The existence of these conditions may create a need for increased formal interaction and an expectation that such co-operation would be of some benefit to the various parties. The Adler and Barnett framework emphasises the existence of external threats, though internal threats are as important and are proving to be a catalyst for attempts at achieving African union.

(b) Tier two

This tier includes factors that are conducive to the development of mutual trust and collective identity and is characterised by closer and more frequent interactions that have started to transform the environment in which participating states and their citizens are embedded. There are two categories: structure (power and knowledge) and process (transactions, organisations and social learning). The distinction between

structural and process categories denotes the reciprocal relationship between the two sets of variables that provide the conditions under which a collective identity and trust can develop. Power and knowledge are considered to be the crucial underpinnings of the community. Power here refers to the need for a core state or group of states around which the integrative process develops within a certain cognitive structure such as, for instance, a developmentalist ideology.²⁰⁾

The process categories comprise various transactions denoting symbolic, economic, political, material, technological and cultural exchanges, as well as international organisations and institutions that facilitate such transactions, and social learning. The latter category reflects the importance of political elites who fulfil the critical role of redefining and reinterpreting reality. Although it is important to have such "visionaries" in all member societies, the origin of "new" social learning that would promote the development of a security community is usually found within the core state(s). The framework tends to emphasise the quantity of transactions and makes only passing reference to the quality and nature of such transactions.²¹⁾ Yet quality is of the essence. In Southern Africa, for example, economic interaction between South Africa as the core country and its neighbours has multiplied during the 1990s, but it has resulted in a negative trade balance for South Africa's regional trade partners and a feeling among them that the benefits of increased trade relations are accruing disproportionately to the core. Such resentment inhibits trust building and can turn into an obstacle in the attempt to build a community.

(c) Tier three

Tier three consists of the necessary conditions for dependable expectations of peaceful change, namely mutual trust and collective identity. The variables contained in the first two tiers exhibit positive and dynamic relationships that are conducive to the growth of trust and a common identity (two qualities that are mutually reinforcing) among the members of a co-operative group of states and their populations. Yet this is not a linear process. Some degree of mutual trust and shared identity, at the very least among core members and elites, is necessary to get the community building process under way. The third tier is therefore one that underlies the first two, yet is reinforced and deepened by success and progress in the other tiers.

3.2 Types

As far as the three types of security communities are concerned (nascent, ascendant and mature), cognisance needs to be taken of the fact that these types lie on a continuum that implies or reflects an evolutionary pattern of development. More importantly, security communities are social constructs: they are "built" through conscious human endeavour and in this sense represent "imagined communities". The end product may not necessarily reflect the original dream though, because, in the words of Krasner, "(i)nitia] choices, often small and random, determine future historical trajectories"²²⁾ and not all such communities will therefore follow the same pathway. Broadly speaking, though, each phase/type in the evolution of a security community will exhibit the following characteristics:

(a) Nascent security communities

- The existence of "trigger mechanisms", likely to have material and normative bases, that prompt a need for closer interaction and co-operation, often starting off with a mutual security threat;
- a critical role played by organisations; and
- the existence of a strong state or group of states that provide leadership around core issues.

(b) Ascendant security communities

- Increasingly dense networks of interactions and exchange that promote trust and a common identity; and
- the insitutionalisation of cognitive structures facilitating social learning.

(c) Mature security communities

- A high degree of trust;
- a shared identity that allows for a conscious and deliberate differentiation between those within and those without the community;
- co-operative and collective security;
- a high level of military integration;
- policy co-ordination in dealing with commonly defined internal

- threats;
- free movement of people across national borders;
- the internationalisation of authority; and
- shared rule at the national, transnational and supranational levels.

This summarised framework developed by Adler and Barnett to study security communities creates the impression, particularly when it comes to the three types of communities that are based on a growth-path model, that each phase will necessarily and only exhibit particular characteristics. However, in their own words, these represent "three stylized phases" (emphasis added) and it is conceivable (as will be pointed out) that elements of an ascendant or even a mature security community might already be present in an earlier (nascent) phase. One last point should be made with regard to the framework: the authors imply that community building is very much an intra-community effort and process — "who is inside and who is outside, matters most".²³⁾ But in the case of Africa this inside/outside distinction takes on a specific meaning. As will be argued in the next section, without external involvement in community building attempts, the chances for the success of creating a security community in Africa are very slim indeed, due to the nature and scope of the threats facing the continent.

The extent to which the African Union (as an "imagined security community") and its *Constitutive Act* reflect a conscious attempt to create a security community is subsequently explored.

4. THE AFRICAN UNION AS A SECURITY COMMUNITY

Article 3 of the *Constitutive Act of the African Union* (containing the objectives of the organisation) makes it clear that the organisation is to play a largely facilitating role in building what the Preamble refers to as "our common vision of a united and strong" Africa. The various clauses of article 3 emphasise actions such as "accelerate", "promote" and "advance" and combined with the key principles (article 4(a) and (b)) of the "sovereign equality and interdependence among Member States" and "respect of borders existing on achievement of independence" point to the goal of achieving a "loosely coupled security community".²⁴⁾ Already in the article containing the objectives of the new organisation

a tension or contradiction is evident: 3(b) refers to defending the "sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence" of member states while 3(c) undertakes to "accelerate the political and socio-economic integration of the continent". This contradiction is something that should be carefully watched as it contains the possibility of a conflict between the principle of national sovereignty (and non-intervention in the internal affairs of a member country) and that of increased supranationality implied by 4(h): "[T]he right of the Union to intervene in a Member State pursuant to a decision of the Assembly in respect of grave circumstances, namely war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity".²⁵⁾

In practice, though at a different level, the process of establishing the AU has already seen its first (admittedly "light") power contest: the OAU Secretariat initially offered to develop the rules of procedure for the various organs of the AU, but there was a very strong feeling amongst member states, including civil society, that the organisation should be member state-driven and not by its Commission (the Secretariat under the OAU).²⁶⁾ Most countries, particularly those in Africa, have been loath to give up aspects of their sovereignty. Should the AU succeed in dictating the behaviour of its member states it will probably be due to multilateralism rather than supranationalism. Therefore, the power base within the organisation; the knowledge that is transmitted through social learning; and, perhaps first and foremost, the visible benefits that might accrue from membership will become of prime importance. This leads to an attempt to answer the question whether the necessary conditions under which a security community will emerge do in fact exist on the continent. In the following analysis the three-tiered framework set out in the previous section is used. Such a disaggregation of variables is at times somewhat contrived and the dynamic interaction between the variables within and across the various tiers, despite the artificial categorisation presented here, should be kept in mind.

4.1 Tier one: Precipitating conditions

Africa's long history of "planning exercises"²⁷⁾ confirms an awareness of mutual problems and a need for co-operation in solving these. The precipitating conditions that promote community building have been present all along and political leaders have been aware of these conditions and the need for co-operation ever since the start of decolonisation in the late 1950s. Initially, there was disagreement on the time-span

within which African union should be achieved. The radical school, presented by Nkrumah (of Ghana), envisaged the immediate creation of a continental federal government, whereas Nyerere (of Tanzania) and his followers advocated a more gradualist approach. The latter approach won out and determined the nature, functions and powers of the OAU that was founded in 1963.²⁸⁾

The creation of the AU is therefore not so much a response to new changes in terms of technology, demography or the environment, but rather a result of, on the one hand, an intensification of these changes and trends; and, on the other hand, new interpretations of social reality which give these trends and the need to respond to them a sense of urgency that was previously largely absent. Increasingly, there seems to be an awareness that what the continent is battling with, is a threat to human survival that calls for serious and immediate action to create security on the continent.²⁹⁾ In the New African Initiative (now NEPAD), the scope of the crisis is presented as follows:³⁰⁾

In Africa, 340 million people, or half of the population, live on less than US\$1 per day. The mortality rate of children under 5 years of age is 140 per 1 000, and life expectancy at birth is only 54 years. Only 58% of the population have access to safe water. The rate of illiteracy for people over 15 is 41 per cent. There are only 18 mainline telephones per 1 000 people in Africa.

Africa's marginalisation from the global economy; its weak voice in international political affairs; its underdevelopment and abject poverty; and its vulnerability to pandemics (first malaria, then tuberculosis and more recently HIV/AIDS) have been enduring characteristics of the continent's succession of political and socio-economic crises. These characteristics also reflect the various threats the continent is facing. Though Adler and Barnett identify "external threats" as a precipitating condition that might encourage closer interaction and co-operation, African countries share with most other developing countries also the problem of "internal" threats across a range of dimensions. These threats are often transnational in nature or impact (the spill-over effects of internal conflict and diseases) or common to the majority of countries (wide-spread poverty, lack of infrastructure and environmental degradation) and generate expectations that co-operation might bring improvement. In the face of these trends and threats NEPAD in particular

reflects a markedly clear "new interpretation of social reality", also as far as its acceptance by the developed countries of the North is concerned. Olivier points to the following in this regard:³¹⁾

- The continent's two most powerful countries, South Africa and Nigeria, are primary players that are "highly committed to the systematic resurrection of the continent".
- The North and the major international financial institutions such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO) are increasingly taking the South more seriously.³²⁾
- NEPAD centres around African ownership and management — a clear break with for instance IMF/World Bank structural adjustment programmes and an aid-dependency culture which has developed over time.

To this can be added: the emergence of a number of democratic regimes over the past decade; and an increasing demand by African populations for respect for human rights and popular participation in economic and political life even though these developments are still "uneven and inadequate and need to be further expedited".³³⁾ These are clear signs of an interpretation of social reality that differs from the past and that point to the possibility of a new beginning for at least parts of the continent. As far as the first tier conditions for the emergence of a security community are concerned, Africa would seem to be ready to embark on the building of a security community. Trends, changes and threats have over time reinforced the belief that co-operation is necessary in order to overcome problems and the present interpretation of social reality favours a co-operative approach to the attainment of security, stability and development on the continent. What Africa is attempting to do is nothing less than changing a "community of fate" into one of security.³⁴⁾

4.2 Tier two: Structure and process

In the previous discussion much has been made of new interpretations of social reality, but to this a note of caution is added. It is not so much a case of whether there is a development of new interpretations of social

reality, but rather whether there are competing interpretations attempting to utilise the AU as a mechanism or instrument through which to realise a particular agenda. This relates to the structural dimension of the second tier, defined as power and knowledge. Both Deutsch and later proponents of the concept of security communities agree that such communities develop around a core state or group of states with the power to stabilise the environment and to determine the content of the values that are transmitted and pursued within the emerging community.³⁵⁾

The question here is who has the power to enforce their version of knowledge (based on a particular interpretation of social reality) within the community? At this point in time, with the AU in the process of being established, this question is of particular importance. Recall the Nkrumah/Nyerere radical/gradualist divide so as to realise that whichever approach or vision wins out in the early stages of the development of the organisation will probably determine the future course of events at the continental level. There are at present two competing "knowledge structures" at work at the continental level that points to the existence of a rift between what Kornegay terms a revisionist/reformation bloc and a counter-revisionist bloc.³⁶⁾ South Africa, Nigeria and Algeria, the original proponents of the MAP strategy were soon joined by Senegal³⁷⁾ and Egypt, with Ghana, Botswana, Mozambique and Tanzania as keen supporters or "junior" partners. These countries form part of the revisionist bloc. Under Gaddafi's Libyan leadership the counter-revisionist bloc includes Liberia, Zimbabwe, Ivory Coast, Guinea, Burkina Faso and Swaziland.³⁸⁾ The defining characteristic of this latter group is their resistance to "substantive democratic change".³⁹⁾

Despite the strong points of the leaders of the revisionist group (Nigeria has since independence been an African great power with major influence on the continent; South Africa is the most developed and industrialised country in Africa; Senegal is traditionally the leader of francophone Africa, etc) and their commitment to a specific value system that accords with those political ideas and meanings related to a security community (liberalism and democracy), their acceptance as leaders and "role-models" cannot be taken for granted.⁴⁰⁾ The lure of Gaddafi's "chequebook diplomacy" should not be underrated. But more crucial — the counter-revisionist resistance to democratic change and to compliance with democratic principles (such as the rule of law, the encouragement of civil society participation, etc) might be attractive to old-style African leaders who resist change and who continue clinging

to power. It will be the ability of the revisionist group within the AU to foster a "taste" for democracy, to generate attempts at emulation and to be prepared to take up strong leadership positions and responsibilities, that will determine whether the organisation will emerge as a security community, or whether it would continue to be the OAU under a new name.⁴¹⁾ The importance of this issue of who holds power and whose knowledge will permeate the AU should not be under-estimated. It also impacts on the process categories of the framework.

Evidence of intense and wide-ranging transactions among members of a group is considered to be *prima facie* proof of the existence of a security community. This assumption is based on Deutsch's original emphasis on communication as the lifeblood of a community because it engenders mutual trust and a common identity. In the realm of transactions and exchange, Africa has always been somewhat enigmatic. On the one hand there has been an emphasis on unity and pan-Africanism, on the other there has been a clear extra-continental orientation best explained perhaps by political and economic (particularly the latter) ties with former colonial powers.⁴²⁾

Proponents of continental integration lament the lack of intra-continental trade and investment on the assumption that such exchanges are of crucial importance to the process of integration, a view that is actually more in line with Northern (particularly European) experience with community building.⁴³⁾ As pointed out earlier, it is not so much the quantity of transactions that contribute to community building, but rather the quality of these transactions. This observation is born out by the Association of South East Asian Nations' (ASEAN) experience which shows that intra-community trade and commercial ties are not as important as assumed by Northern analysts.⁴⁴⁾ Exchange and transactions, it would seem, do not necessarily have to be based on increased and increasing intra-community trade relations (although such developments will obviously increase interdependence). The emphasis should be on increased transactions that *benefit* participating countries (and groups) in various spheres — it is quality and outcome that matters, not so much quantity and outputs.

In the economic sphere such transactions can, as is the case with ASEAN, be along the lines of collective bargaining to improve the position and goals of member states in the global economy. In this sense the AU is on a similar track. NEPAD, adopted (under the name of MAP/NAI) as a continental initiative is by and large a programme aimed at improving

the position of the continent in the global political economy.⁴⁵⁾ South Africa's Mbeki and Nigeria's Obasanjo (and Bouteflika of Algeria to some extent) have already used a number of opportunities to articulate and argue a common African position on a range of concerns (amongst them the issues of debt relief, better access of African goods to Western markets and greater international burden-sharing in African peacekeeping missions)⁴⁶⁾ at international forums. These forums include, amongst others, the Group of Eight (G8) and the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos in early 2001 and most recently the International Conference on Financing for Development held in Monterrey, Mexico, in March 2002. This "speaking with one voice" trend is something new for Africa, particularly in as far as it goes hand-in-hand with practical suggestions as to how the continent's global position can be strengthened and improved. Acting in such a collective way of course also increases the development of a "we"-feeling, fostering a collective identity.

An area of "quality transactions" that will be a test for the continental organisation and for the political will of its members in building a security community, will be that of conflict resolution and in more general terms dealing with broad issues of security. The AU will have two mechanisms to deal with issues of security, namely the OAU's Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (Conflict Mechanism for short) established by the Cairo Summit in 1993 and adopted as an institution of the AU during the Summit of 2001,⁴⁷⁾ and the Conference on Security, Stability and Development Co-operation in Africa (CSSDCA) that was also adopted as a process within the framework of the new organisation. A detailed discussion of these two mechanisms cannot be undertaken in this article, but a few comments are in order.

The Conflict Mechanism concentrates on preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peacebuilding, making it clear that in the case of complex and expensive peacekeeping operations, "the services of the United Nations will be sought under the general terms of its Charter",⁴⁸⁾ thereby emphasising the fact that Africa will need extensive international involvement to assist it in its community building efforts. Up to now the Conflict Mechanism has largely been involved in the Burundi peace process for a number of years, as well as in an unsuccessful observer mission to the Comores in 1997 and in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue. Patel points out that the Comores mission was not a complete failure, as it promoted "confidence and capacity building in the areas of

peace and security".⁴⁹⁾ The CSSDCA, on the other hand, is concerned with more than conflict or potential conflict situations in that it consists of four calabashes — security, stability, development and co-operation (though the latter two are usually treated as one, that is co-operation on and for development) — and aims to foster and promote the objectives of attaining security, stability and development on the continent, recognising an explicit link between conflict prevention and management (the Conflict Mechanism) and the CSSDCA process. Both the Conflict Mechanism and the CSSDCA provide for a "Council of Elders", consisting of former heads of state of high standing in Africa. In the case of Burundi it is former President Mandela (of South Africa), and in the Great Lakes conflict, former President Masire (of Botswana).

The idea of such a Council of Elders, together with NEPAD's proposal for a "directing mechanism" consisting of a Heads of State Forum⁵⁰⁾ that will manage the recovery plan as well as perform an executive function in African conflict management,⁵¹⁾ reinforces an important "dual"-trend that is becoming evident in African politics. By this is meant a move away from a "hard stance" on sovereignty and non-intervention that means protection by African leaders of one another, no matter what the internal conditions, to an approach that enables criticism (if not yet direct action) of "bad governance" (a form of peer pressure and peer review), as well as a resolution to take joint responsibility to mobilise collective action on the various objectives and goals contained in the CA and NEPAD. The importance of this "change of direction" should not be under-estimated. As argued earlier, African unity for a long time manifested in "closed ranks" among African leaders who could in no way have been described as "democratic" leaders. Breaking ranks was viewed as treason against "Africa" and resulted in ostracism, as South Africa found out in late 1995 when it dared to criticise the Nigerian Abacha government internationally for its execution of Sara Wiwo and his Ogoniland comrades.⁵²⁾ Yet, increasingly African leaders speak out in public against undemocratic and unconstitutional practices. The pressure put on Zambia's President Chiluba to refrain from running for an unconstitutional third term in office is but one example. Similar criticism, albeit cloaked in at times rather vague warnings, can be heard about Malawi's President Muluzi who also seems to want to change his country's constitution to allow for a third presidential term. More importantly, whereas there was a time when no one would criticise Zimbabwe's President Mugabe, a number of leaders have be-

come more open and fierce in their condemnation of his conduct.⁵³⁾

Botswana's President Festus Mogae broke from the traditional solidarity rank closure known in Africa politics and criticised President Robert Mugabe for the controversial land grab policy that has triggered a political and economic crisis. Mogae said in an interview that attempted intervention by other neighbouring leaders seeking the restoration of order in Zimbabwe had so far failed as Mugabe is not prepared to change his attitude and refuses to take note of what is happening in his country. Mogae accused Mugabe and his country's war veterans of dragging the entire southern African economy down, saying regional leaders were becoming frustrated with the impact the Zimbabwe crisis was having on their economies.

These are new sounds in Africa and point to the possibility of a new political culture developing, one that underscores the NEPAD claim about "African ownership and management" and African leaders taking "joint responsibility" for security and development on the continent.

The second process category is that of organisations. The establishment of the African Union is of course the most obvious manifestation of a wish or intention to create a community. Based on Adler and Barnett's discussion of the organisations and social learning variables of the process category in the second tier, an international organisation can encourage and facilitate the emergence of a security community by:⁵⁴⁾

- establishing norms of behaviour, monitoring mechanisms and sanctions to enforce norms;
- encouraging trust-building, facilitating transactions and shaping behaviour through social learning;⁵⁵⁾
- bestowing a sense of belonging and promoting a certain culture; and
- spreading and reinforcing the values of its core members.

The authors add that "(b)ehind every innovative institution stand creative and farsighted political elites" who use these organisations to "promote new possibilities"⁵⁶⁾ — they are agents of social learning, using the organisation as an instrument. These elites are visible in the persons of the "new generation of African leaders" and as far as the

revisionist group is concerned, it is fairly obvious which values the organisation will seek to promote. Less clear are their chances of success. The one thing that the almost four decade long existence of the OAU demonstrated was that good intentions do not automatically translate into good governance practices. The old saying that "the road to hell is paved with good intentions" found new meaning in many post-colonial African countries. It has become a cliché to point out the large-scale human rights violations and other crimes committed by a host of African regimes in the post-independence period. Far from condemning such practices, the OAU in effect protected such regimes in the name of African unity, a claim that parodied the original intentions of the continent's leaders and one that was abused to protect leaders and not the "African people" so often and piously referred to in various treaties and declarations. It should be remembered, though, as pointed out earlier, that the AU will only be able to intervene in the internal matters of a member country under specific and very grave circumstances. The complex situation in Zimbabwe, for instance, does not warrant such intervention in terms of the CA. The test for the AU will be whether it can *socialise* its members, across the various divisions on the continent, into emulating the conduct, goals and objectives of the core "revisionist" leadership.

During the OAU summit of July 1999 it was decided no longer to admit leaders who had come to power through unconstitutional means to meetings of the organisation and this decision was applied subsequently when Cote d'Ivoire became the first country to be "handed a red card".⁵⁷⁾ What remains now is to devise a system of rules of procedure for the various organs that will promote change in those regimes that have so far failed to liberalise and democratise (the counter-revisionist group). One sure way of attaining this objective would be for the core leadership to demonstrate success in improving conditions on the continent. Some functional processes that could result in a "general improvement in overall conditions" would lend credence and credibility to the organisation and to a particular value system. The South African peacekeeping mission to Burundi, if successful, might be one such "proof" that the continent is on its way to "reclaim its destiny". A resolution of the multiple crises in Zimbabwe would be another (though as pointed out earlier, this will not be achieved through direct intervention), as would a genuine breakthrough in debt relief. NEPAD as a long-term project is one thing. In these early stages it might be wise to

select a few core issues spanning a number of security dimensions and to concentrate on visible and lasting successes. In such a way it would also cement a victory for the revisionist group.

But in order to succeed some concrete external assistance would be needed. For a good reason Mbeki, Obasanjo and other NEPAD proponents chose the word "partnership" for their recovery programme: "It is a call for a new relationship of partnership between Africa and the international community ... to overcome the development chasm that has widened over centuries of unequal relations".⁵⁸⁾ Debt relief and massive peacekeeping and peacebuilding assistance in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and wider Great Lakes Region might be two "external" initiatives that might confirm legitimacy and credibility on the new organisation inside and outside the continent. The events of 11 September 2001 in the United States (US) have opened up a leveraging opportunity for the developing countries. The US and its European allies seem intent to gain support for their "war against terrorism" and might therefore be more susceptible to lend tangible support to developing countries. It is up to the continent's leadership to seize this moment.

4.3 Tier three: Mutual trust and collective identity

Mutual trust and a collective identity are deemed to be the "necessary conditions" for the emergence and continued existence of a security community. The assumption is that the categories of conditions identified in the first two tiers of the framework contribute to the development of trust and a common identity and that once these characteristics become the hallmark of the community, it can be termed a "genuine" security community. As pointed out earlier, the various categories of variables are mutually reinforcing and it is particularly difficult to isolate "trust and identity" as separate characteristics. Such qualities are, on the one hand, the products of, for instance, social learning (tier two) and the recognition that certain endogenous and exogenous changes and trends require co-operation (tier one). On the other hand, a measure of mutual trust at the very least is necessary in order to promote social learning, or the belief that co-operation might have mutually beneficial results. It is therefore suggested that these two qualities are not so much in a separate category, but that they are to some extent cross-cutting conditions that are improved or strengthened by successes

achieved in developments related to the second tier categories.

There can be little doubt that something like a distinct "African sense of identity" exists. If nothing else, a common identity, however symbolic, is something that has been nurtured over decades, reinforced by the tenets of pan-Africanism and the continental struggle against colonialism and *apartheid*. Yet, a common identity does not necessarily point to mutual trust. Reports abound of the lack of trust in South Africa and its actions and motives when it comes to its relations with the rest of the continent, and this lack of trust obviously makes it difficult for the country to play a leadership role.⁵⁹⁾ There are also other (less obvious, though) divisions that inhibit trust-building on the continent, such as a divide between North (Arab) Africa and sub-Saharan Africa, Islam/non-Islam Africa and francophone/anglophone Africa. The latter may have been successfully transcended in the merging of MAP and OMEGA (as discussed previously), but the revisionist/counter-revisionist divide may reinforce new "alliances" that will be based on a liberal/conservative identity.

The new generation of African leaders who claim to have the political will to lead an African renaissance is clearly building trust and confidence in various ways. The South Africa-Nigeria Binational Commission, the South Africa-Egypt Binational Commission and regular consultations between various members of the revisionist group (particularly at the level of officials involved in developing the rules of procedure for the different organs of the AU, of civil society organisations across borders, and of interactions between politicians, officials and members of civil society⁶⁰⁾) are not only encouraging transactions, but also deepening mutual trust and confidence.

5. CONCLUSION

The analysis presented here points to the existence of at the very least an emerging security community on the African continent. Intra-continental existential crises and external factors (most notably the continent's marginalised position in the global economy and the resulting negative impact of globalisation on African economies) have served as catalysts to generate a renewed search for security and development through co-operation and integration within the institutional framework of the AU. In this sense the AU as an organisational manifestation of a security community points to a level of development congruent with what Adler

and Barnett describe as a nascent community. There is also strong evidence of some of the characteristics of an ascendant security community, namely increasingly dense networks of interactions and exchange that promote mutual trust and a "we-feeling" or common identity. The analysis furthermore points to the fact that the quality of interactions are, at least on paper in this relatively early stage, indicative of the type of interactions necessary to address the problems faced by the community. As far as the characteristics of a mature security community are concerned, there is not yet any evidence of these. The extent to which the organisation's Conflict Mechanism and the CSSDCA, as well as sub-regional efforts at preventive diplomacy and peacebuilding (for example in Burundi and the DRC) succeed over the next two to three years, will indicate whether there are signs that the continent is moving towards a more mature form of security community.

A number of challenges and potential problem areas need to be pointed out in conclusion. First, the continent-wide attempt at building a security community is unique in the sense that it is such a big region — there are 53 member states (with Morocco the only state not a member). Even the UN, when it started out in 1945, had less members than the AU. One way of overcoming this problem, is through the idea of building blocs, with the continent divided into five sub-regions and the objective is that each sub-region will form a regional community (known as regional economic communities or RECs) to enhance co-operation and integration. Apart from West Africa's Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Southern Africa's Southern African Development Community (SADC), though, none of the other regions has strong institutions to foster regional co-operation, the Great Lakes/Central African region being the weakest in this regard, followed by East Africa.⁶¹⁾ The relationship between the RECs and the AU, and at the horizontal level between the various RECs still needs to be clarified, expanded and implemented.⁶²⁾ Apart from weak institutions, there are also problems related to the huge differences between the various RECs in terms of their level of development. These differences are obstacles to policy co-operation and harmonisation with a view to continental integration. Consequently, a rather varied development path for the continent's RECs can be expected, something that may in the long run actually impede over-all community building as it may undermine mutual trust.

A second problem is the external perception of Africa as "Africa

the country" — there is a tendency to see all of Africa as homogenous and a failure to recognise vast differences between countries and regions. The conflict between Zimbabwe's Mugabe and Western leaders in the run-up to and in the aftermath of the March 2002 elections, resulted in speculation that Western support for NEPAD would become a first casualty: a form of "collective punishment" for the whole continent because one particular member does not tow the line. It is doubtful whether the rest of the world would have reacted in the same way towards the European Union (EU) should rightwing presidential candidate Le Pen have won the French Presidential election.

Another problem is to be found in the area of continental leadership. Statesmen like Mbeki, Obasanjo, Wade (of Senegal) and others belonging to the revisionist group are clearly leaders who are confident in the security of their own regimes — something that has been lacking in Africa for many decades⁶³⁾ — and can therefore "afford" to call for (or to support) democratisation and liberalisation on the rest of the continent. Their countries can serve as examples to be emulated by others who attempt similar reforms. But these leaders face two problems. The first is that they are from still fragile democracies that face different, but potentially serious internal threats. Should they fail to address the problems inside their own countries, their ability to serve as a strong core around which the community can be built will fail. Apart from the obvious negative consequences of such failure, it will strengthen the counter-revisionist group with its reluctance to reform. The second problem is that these leaders have to "deliver a Northern dividend" — they have to prove to Africans and to the North that Africa can take responsibility for itself, in order to attract the necessary material resources to enable them to make a success of their community building ideals. At the same time, they need early inputs from the North in order to assist them in showing the concrete benefits of co-operation, liberalisation and democratisation. If substantial Northern assistance in the field of economic development and conflict management and resolution (assistance, for example, for and in the form of peacekeeping operations) is not forthcoming, the AU and what it stands for will, in the long run, fail. On its own the continent will not be able to build a security community in the sense of a place where there are long-term expectations — and evidence — of development, peace and security.

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2. Paragraph 7 of the Preamble of the *Constitutive Act (CA)*; article 4(c) of the *Constitutive Act*; paragraph 7(a)(l) of *Summit Decision of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government on the Implementation of the State Summit Decision on the African Union*, AHG/Dec.160/XXXVII.
3. Article 3(f) and 4(e) of the CA.
4. Article 3(j) of the CA.
5. In this article the *New African Initiative* document as published by the South African Department of Foreign Affairs in July 2001 is used. NEPAD though has seen no changes to this original document, except in the name of the programme.
6. There are no female heads of state and government on the continent.
7. Paragraph 3(a) of *Council of Ministers' Report CM/Rpt (LXXXIV)*.
8. The full title of this document is *Relaunching Africa's Economic and Social Development: The Cairo Agenda for Action*, OAU, Addis Ababa.
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10. Asante, S K B, *Towards an African Economic Community*, Africa Institute, Pretoria, 2001, p 3.
11. Deutsch, K *et al*, *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1985, p 5.
12. The term "negative peace" refers to the absence of war, turmoil and violent conflict, whereas "positive peace" is defined in the words of Kenneth Boulding as a "condition of good management, orderly resolution of conflict, harmony associated with mature relationships, gentleness and love". Boulding, K, *Stable Peace*, University of Texas, Austin, 1878, p 3.
13. Keohane, R and J Nye, "International Interdependence and Integration", in Greenstein, F and N Polsby (eds), *Handbook of Political Science*, Addison-Wesley, Reading, 1975, p 365.
14. In a 1994 survey of regional security building, Acharya concluded that such communities were virtually non-existing in the developing world. Acharya, A, 1994, "Regional approaches to security in the third world: lessons and prospects", in Swatuk, L and T Shaw (eds), *The South at the End of the Twentieth Century*, St Martin's, London, 1994, pp 79-94.
15. See Vasquez, J (ed), *Classics of International Relations*, third edition, Prentice-Hall, Upper Saddle River, 1966, pp 288-289; and Keohane, R and J Nye, *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition*, Little, Brown Co, Boston, 1977.
16. Adler, E and M Barnett (eds), *Security Communities*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1998, particularly chapters 1, 2 and 13. These authors are the only ones to have made a comprehensive study of security communities since the pioneering work of Karl Deutsch, including in their work also analyses of community building efforts in the developing world.
17. Acharya, A, "Collective identity and conflict management in Southeast Asia", in Adler, E and M Barnett (eds), *op cit*, p 203.
18. *Ibid*.
19. This section depends heavily on the work of Adler, E and M Barnett, *op cit*, chapter 2.
20. The link between power and knowledge is of crucial importance here. It is a particular *kind* of knowledge (with knowledge defined by Adler and Barnett as "those cognitive structures that facilitate practices that are tied to the development of mutual trust and identity, and analytically tied to conflict and conflict resolution" — *Ibid*, p 40) that facilitates the development of a security community. This definition of knowledge is along the lines of a Gramscian understanding of hegemony. There can also be a kind of knowledge, more reminiscent of the realist tradition, in which a hegemony would be found that induces the development of dependency of the periphery on the core, much as was the case in southern Africa during the *apartheid* era.
21. *Ibid*, p 426.
22. Krasner, S, "Sovereignty, an institutional perspective", *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol 21, No 1, 1988, p 83.
23. Adler, E and M Barnett, *op cit*, p 4.
24. *Ibid*, p 56.
25. Much will depend on the definition of such crimes in particular situations.
26. See for example the notes of the *rapporteur* after a meeting between (South African) civil society groups and officials from the Department of Foreign Affairs entitled "AISA-DFA Workshop on the Roles of Procedure of the African Union's Organs", Pretoria, 9 and 12 October 2001. In this particular instance it was decided at the Summit that a group of 15 member states would co-operate to develop the rules of procedure for the various organs. See also article 3.5 of the *Record of the Meeting of SADC Ministers Responsible for Foreign Affairs and Finance*, confirming the OAU summit decision that "the process should be Member State-driven", Blantyre, Malawi, 13 September 2001, p 5.
27. An expression used by Elmandjra in Legum, C, *op cit*, p 86.
28. For a historical overview, see Nabudere, D W, "African unity in historical perspective", in Maloka, E (ed), *A United States of Africa?*, Africa Institute, Pretoria, 2001.
29. "Security is about survival. It is when an issue is presented as posing an existential threat to a designated referent object". Buzan, B, Wæver, O and

- J de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, Lynne Rienner, Boulder, 1998, p 21.
30. *New African Initiative*, *op cit*, 1.4
 31. Olivier, G, "The North-South dialogue: a sterile debate?" Paper presented at a Conference on *Dialogue among Civilizations: Crossing the Divides*, hosted by the Unit for Policy Studies, Centre for International Political Studies, University of Pretoria, 24 October 2001.
 32. Evidence of this is to be found in the agreement reached in Doha, Qatar on the new agenda for the next round of WTO negotiations. See *International Herald Tribune*, 15 November 2001.
 33. *New African Initiative*, "Introduction", paragraph 7.
 34. A "community of fate" refers to a group of states that is "thrown together" due to geographical proximity, that shares problems, but that fails to address these through some kind of positive regional arrangement. The Middle East would seem to be such a community of fate.
 35. Deutsch, K *et al*, *op cit*, p 38; and Adler, E and M Barnett, *op cit*, p 39.
 36. Kornegay, F, "The geopolitics of redress: reconfiguring Africa's diplomacy", *Global Insight*, Volume 13, October 2001, p 2.
 37. Senegal's President Wade proposed his own version of an economic development programme for the continent (the OMEGA plan) soon after the unveiling of the MAP. The ensuing successful merging of the MAP and OMEGA into the NAI can be considered an important milestone in the building of mutual trust on the continent as the historical "breach" between francophone and anglophone Africa was thereby transcended.
 38. Without making too much of it, it is also necessary to entertain the possibility that Uganda could be included in the counter-revisionist bloc, given its close ties with Libya and President Museveni's rather quirky views on democracy. It is interesting to note that several heads of state who claim that "Western-style" democracy is not necessarily applicable to African conditions (amongst them Mugabe and Gaddafi) are members of this group. Incidentally, this implied distinction between Western democracy and what would supposedly be "African" democracy, is yet to be properly defined. A further noteworthy point is that Gaddafi's "petrodollar patronage" cuts across the Islam/non-Islam divide in sub-Saharan Africa.
 39. Kornegay, F, *op cit*, p 2. For an interesting pro-Libyan account at how the OAU was transformed into the AU, see Ndi-Zambo, B, "African unity: looking back, looking forward, and a recipe for failure", in Maloka, E, *op cit*, 2001, pp 29-40.
 40. See Adler, E and M Barnett, *op cit*, p 40.
 41. In this sense South Africa's peacekeeping operation in Burundi might turn into an important test for the country's ability to be a genuine leader on the continent and to serve as a "magnet" that attracts other powers in the expectation that they would benefit from association with the powerful core.
 42. See Mazrui, A, *Africa's International Relations: The Diplomacy of Dependency and Change*, Heinemann, London, 1977, pp 85-113.
 43. See for instance Asante, S K B, *op cit*, pp 5-7; and Miyanda, F, "Globalisation and regional integration: obstacles to its attainment", in Maloka, E, *op cit*, pp 250-252.
 44. Acharya, A, *op cit*, p 204-205.
 45. The initiative was adopted by the OAU Summit in July 2001.
 46. Kornegay, F and S Chesterman, *Southern Africa's Evolving Security Architecture: Problems and Prospects*, Conference Report, International Peace Academy, Gaborone, December 2000, p 12.
 47. See Patel, N, "Conflict resolution through regional organisations in Africa", in Maloka, E, *op cit*, pp 363-365.
 48. "Declaration on a Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution", OAU, Addis Ababa, 1993, paragraph 16.
 49. Patel, N, *op cit*, p 365.
 50. See section V of NAI/NEPAD, in particular A54.1 (i) and (ii).
 51. For a more detailed discussion, see Kornegay, F, "Reflections on African Peace-building: A background paper exploring a regional role for a strategic recovery facility", *Occasional Paper No 1*, Centre for African International Relations, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 2001, pp 8-11.
 52. For a detailed discussion, see Van Aardt, M, "A foreign policy to die for: South Africa's response to the Nigerian crisis", *Africa Insight*, Vol 26, No 2, 1996.
 53. The extract is from *Africa Institute of South Africa Current Affairs Briefing*, 47/2001, pp 2-3. In the same issue (p 2) there is also a report about Mozambique's President Chissano criticising the Swazi king and warning that Swaziland is posing a threat to the region due to its refusal to democratise.
 54. See Adler, E and M Barnett, *op cit*, pp 41-45; and pp 418-423.
 55. Learning is defined as "an active process of redefinition and reinterpretation of reality on the basis of new causal and normative knowledge" and it has a social dimension because it can "promote mutual trust and shape the identities of actors". Adler, E and M Barnett, *op cit*, p 422.
 56. *Ibid*, p 43.
 57. See Annan, K, *Report of the Secretary-General on Support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies*, United Nations General Assembly, New York, A/56/499, 23 October 2001, p 5.
 58. *New Africa Initiative*, *op cit*, paragraph 8.
 59. See for example the discussion by Kornegay, F and S Chesterman, *op cit*, pp 12-14.
 60. These meetings are known as "seminar diplomacy", a process popularised by the OSCE and involving the integration of "academic expertise and diplomatic discourse and practice". See Adler, E, "The OSCE's security commun-

ity-building model", in Adler, E and M Barnett, *op cit*, p 121.

61. It should be pointed out here that SADC is in fact not one of the RECs as recognised by the OAU in its adoption of the *Abuja Treaty* in 1991. COMESA (Common Market of Eastern and Southern African States) is the REC designated by the Treaty for Southern and Eastern Africa.
62. For a more detailed discussion, see Asante, S K B, *op cit*, pp 9-13.
63. See Ayoob, M, "The security problematic of the Third World", *World Politics*, Volume 43, 1991, pp 257-283.