

The Third Conference on National Dialogues, 5-6 April 2017

The House of the Estates, Helsinki

Panel on Regional Organisations' Support to National Dialogue Processes

In the African context, regional and sub-regional organizations – namely, the African Union (AU) and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) – play an increasingly active role in the field of peace and security. As core building blocks of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), the AU and the RECs have supported national dialogue and reconciliation efforts in a number of countries – from the Central African Republic and Guinea-Bissau to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Today, their support continues to be solicited in diverse contexts, included but not limited to South Sudan and Burundi.

While the AU and the RECs have been involved in many national dialogue processes, their role has varied from context to context. This panel aims to reflect on the past and current work of the AU and the RECs to analyse their role and impact on national dialogue efforts in greater detail. Along with assessing the work undertaken by the AU and the RECs, the panel seeks to look forward and discuss the potential role of regional actors in future efforts as well as related challenges and opportunities.

More specifically, the panel hopes to nurture active discussion on the following questions: How have the AU and the RECs supported national dialogue efforts in the past? What effect has regional involvement had on national efforts? When is regional support needed, and when is it most effective? What is the added value of regional involvement? Are there challenges related to the involvement of the AU and/or the RECs? Can regional involvement be harmful? Is the principle of subsidiarity useful in guiding the collaboration between the AU and the RECs in national contexts?



Panel:

Mr. Itonde Kakoma, Head for Sub-Saharan Africa, CMI (Moderator)

Dr. Alhaji Sarjoh Bah, AU Peace and Security Department, Head of Division for Crisis Management, Post-Conflict and Reconstruction

Amb. Hamouli Baudouin Kabarhuzato, Director for Political Affairs and Early Warning, ECCAS

Dr. Aleu Garang Aleu, Coordinator, IGAD Mediation Support Unit

Dr. Brown Odigie, ECOWAS Program Officer, Mediation Facilitation Directorate

Ms. Stella Sabiiti, International Consultant and Expert on APSA

Amb. Abdul Mohammed, Chief of Staff and Senior Political Advisor of the African Union High-Level- Implementation Panel for Sudan and South Sudan (Commentator)

Ms. Yvette Ngandu, Coordinator, AU Peace and Security Department (Commentator)

Amb. Corentin Ki-Doulaye, CMI Senior Adviser (Commentator)

