**Research group "Overlapping Spheres of Authority and Interface Conflicts in the Global Order" (OSAIC), funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (June 2017 – May 2020)**

**Sub-project "Management of Interface Conflicts in African Security Governance"**

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**Project summary**

Security issues in global governance are shaped by different spheres of authority and the interaction between multiple political actors on different levels. Legally, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has the supreme political authority to take decisions on the use of military force. However, overlapping memberships of states in the UN(SC) and in various regional (security) organizations enhance the potential for norm conflicts across and within several spheres of authority. One such regional organization is the African Union that was set up in 2002 as successor to the Organization of African Unity and that has established itself as a significant collective security provider. Many violent intra-state conflicts are located within the geographical sphere of the African Union and several military interventions justified with references to human rights norms take place in Africa.

African security governance constitutes a dense web of interactions between international, regional, sub-regional and national actors with competing interests, unequal resources and status. Unclear boundaries do not only refer to competing authorities, but also to blurring geographical responsibilities, evident in the activities of European regional organizations as well as in Arab or Islamic regional organizations. The project analyzes seven cases of military missions in Africa that have been authorized to enforce human rights protection and involve a diverse set of actors from different spheres of authority. Investigating how the authorization, extension and review of specific mandates has come about – what struggles for legitimacy, recognition and material resources have taken place in the course of these processes – will reveal *vertical interface conflicts:* How do key actors within the emerging African security governance architecture perceive, articulate and manage these interface conflicts in the context of military deployments? Which norms do these actors invoke, and how can we explain the variety in responses to such conflicts? What are the effects of different forms of conflict management?

### 1. State of the art

The project draws on three strands of literature in International Relations and, partly, area studies: (a) studies on the changing legitimation of the use of force since 1990; (b) "security governance" and the growing significance of regions in world politics; and (c) studies on military activities of the African Union:

(a)      *Sovereignty and human rights norms*: The field of international security has undergone significant changes since the end of the Cold War. This is partly due to the rise of a comprehensive

concept of "human security" (Paris 2001). *What* is considered as a security threat has changed as much as the question of *who* defines and provides security (see below, section b) – although the UNSC remains the ultimate legitimate authority to decide upon the use of military force (Cronin and Hurd 2008; Krisch 2012). Justifications for the use of force have transformed considerably since the 1990s and liberal democracies have played a leading role in this normative change. The so-called "liberal interventionism" has been a reflection of a world order dominated by liberal states and by liberal norms and principles (e.g. Chandler 2006; Geis 2013; Geis et al. 2013). The most pertinent part of this literature has focused on the normative tensions between state sovereignty/non-interference and the protection of human rights.

The increased significance of human rights norms and democracy in the post-Cold War world order has led to an erosion of non-interference norms in global politics (Brock 2013; Zangl and Zürn 2003). The questionable term "humanitarian intervention" and the military practices carried out under this label have resulted in intensive debates in international law and politics. Since the late 1990s, the UNSC has initiated debates on the protection of particular ('vulnerable') groups in armed conflicts and promoted so-called "protection agendas" for civilians, children and women (Niemann 2015: 2). The gradual redefinition of state sovereignty in terms of a "responsibility to protect" (R2P) at the UN level has not solved the basic dilemmas of decision-making regarding military interventions in a world order marked by high power asymmetries. Such problems include contested definitions of grave human rights violations, selectivity and inconsistency of interventions, and dominance of states with strong military capabilities (Brock 2013; Brühl and Peltner 2015). The R2P has been discussed since its endorsement at the UN World Summit of 2005 as an "emerging norm" and submitted to a renewed review after the Libyan intervention in 2011 (Daase and Junk 2013). A rich body of literature on the emergence, contestation and future of the R2P and on the crucial part of individual 'emerging powers' has developed,[1] but conceptual work and empirical research on the role of regional security actors in the norm development of the R2P is rather recent and merits further inquiry.

(b)      *Complex security governance*: The concept of "security governance" indicates the high differentiation in the field of international security that has been analyzed in many empirical studies. Nation-state actors, regional security organizations, other international institutions with a more inclusive agenda, informal governance "clubs", and non-state actors such as NGOs and private security companies today all contribute to security governance (e.g. Daase and Friesendorf 2010; Schröder 2011). Given the high complexity of the international security architecture, one could expect particularly numerous norm conflicts in this encompassing issue area. Institutional overlap, competition and dysfunctional relations between regional security organizations in the trans-atlantic community have been dealt with to some extent (Hofmann 2011). Instead of the early-1990s vision of inter-locking institutions, Western security institutions have sometimes acted as inter-blocking institutions (e.g. Biermann 2008; Brosig 2011a). The bulk of International Relations security studies has  focused on Western states and organizations that have dominated military intervention-related norm developments and practices (Aris 2014: 5; Geis et al. 2013; Geis and Wagner 2016).

Recent research on a "new regionalism" highlights the growing importance of non-Western regional (security) actors in international politics.[2] While the UN had to recognize its limited

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[1] See, e.g., Bellamy (2015), GPPi (2015), Reinold (2013) and Thakur (2013).
[2] See, e.g., Acharya (2007), Aris and Wenger (2014), Börzel et al. (2012), Börzel and Risse (2016), Buzan and Waever (2003), Crocker et al. (2011), Jetschke and Lenz (2013), Wallensteen and Bjurner (2015), and Weiffen et al. (2013).

capacities and started promoting a "Regional-Global-Security-Partnership" (Gelot 2012: 19-66), the emerging complex security architecture is characterized by ambiguities and unclear boundaries: "(T)here is disagreement between regional perspectives on conceptions and practices of security at a global level, with diverging regional interpretations of commonly defined principles and resolutions, as well as a lack of regional enactment of certain global agreements" (Aris 2014: 3). Differing security cultures and notions of security among regions in Africa and the existence of overlapping memberships and mandates create a high potential for interface conflicts. Especially divergent interpretations of human rights and understandings on the conduct of military interventions can lead to norm conflicts between African regional (security) organizations, EU/NATO and the UN. A number of recent studies have addressed the role of the AU and its interactions with other organizations in dealing with cases of civilian protection.[3] A systematic inquiry into interface conflicts and their management has not been conducted so far.

(c)      *Security governance in Africa*: A considerable body of literature has emerged in recent years on the African Union (AU), its institutional framework, decision-making processes and operational activities.[4] In particular the AU's Peace and Security Council (AU PSC) and its growing authority in regional security governance in Africa have been discussed (Gumedze 2011). Another part of the literature focuses especially on the emergence of the so-called *African Peace and Security Architecture* (APSA) as the most visible and influential outcome of AU politics. This literature evaluates the institutional capacities of APSA and shows how AU peace and security mechanisms are embedded in a broad approach that includes prevention, mediation and other non-military measures of response.[5] Nevertheless, peace operations form a core part of APSA and their impediments and so-far mixed records have been highlighted.[6] In addition, the literature also addresses the interaction between the AU, regional and sub-regional organizations in military missions.[7] Furthermore, the security-related activities of ECOWAS/*Economic Community of West African States* (Arthur 2010; Sampson 2012), IGAD/*Inter-Governmental Authority on Development* (El-Affendi 2001; Murithi 2009; Srinivasan 2014) and SADC/*Southern African Development Community* (Witt 2013) have been studied in some detail. Africa is the continent with the highest number of regional organizations (20), but due to overlaps and partly contradictory objectives their effective operation and performance is limited (Jetschke and Lenz 2013: 632-633).

While the existing literature presents much in-depth knowledge and often relies on significant area expertise, it only rarely relates to the more general debates on institutional overlaps. This is surprising given the growing body of literature on the AU and the R2P as well as comparative analyses of regional security governance mechanisms and the UNSC's authorization of peace operations.[8] Most relevant for the project are those few studies that refer to approaches on organizational interplay and institutional overlap: the special issue of the *South African Journal of International Affairs* (2011, vol. 18, 2) on the interplay of international organizations in different issue areas in Africa (Brosig 2011b) and the special issue of *African Security* (2013, vol. 6, 3-4) in which authors apply the concept of regime complexity to the study of security governance in Africa

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[3] See, e.g., Aning and Salihu (2011), Brosig (2013), Dembinski and Schott (2013, 2014).
[4] See Akokpari et al. (2008), Makinda and Okumu (2008), Makinda et al. (2015) and Murithi (2005).
[5] See, e.g., Engel and Porto (2010, 2013), van Nieuwkerk (2013), Vines (2013) and Williams (2006, 2014).
[6] See Berman and Sams (2002), Boulden (2013), Gelot (2015), Murithi (2008), Tardy and Wyss (2014) and Williams (2009b).
[7] See Aning and Salihu (2011), Gelot (2012), Darkwa and Attuquayefio (2014), Dembinski and Schott (2013).
[8] See Akonor (2010), Durward (2006), Gal-Or (2015), Gelot (2012), Hentz et al. (2009), Williams (2009c), Yamashita (2012) and Zähringer (2013).

(Brosig 2013; Dembinski and Schott 2013). According to Brosig (2013: 173) the interplay of various actors, including UN, Western collective and individual actors, can be considered an emerging African security regime complex, characterized as "decentered, with multiple overlap in membership and policy, raising concerns over operative and normative interaction between elemental actors. Although a number of joint declarations, memoranda of understanding, or partnerships exist, these interinstitutional links are usually only weakly institutionalized and do not proscribe hierarchical relations" (Brosig 2013: 173). However, these studies focus on convergence and regime effectiveness, but not on the management of interface conflicts in case of divergence.

In sum, the project will contribute to the emerging research on how non-Western *regional security organizations* relate to the R2P; more specifically it will provide further empirical insights on African security organizations and their conflictive interplay with each other and with the UN. In addition, it will be able to shed new light on the identification and management of such conflicts by applying the theoretical framework of the OSAIC Research Group. This allows embedding the findings within a broader perspective on emerging and competing spheres of authority.

## 2. *African perspectives on peace and security*

The objectives of the sub-project require a linkage of security governance approaches with non-Western perspectives on peace and security. The regional focus on Africa is warranted by its relative neglect in research on the interplay of international organizations and by its high relevance for global security governance. Most military interventionist practices in the last decade have taken place in Africa and have involved multiple actors. The AU has supported both the endorsement of the "responsibility to protect" and the establishment of the International Criminal Court (ICC).[9] However, the last decade of Western dominated military interventions and numerous ICC investigations about African 'situations' have led to an ambivalent attitude of the AU towards both the R2P and the ICC. Both manifestations of liberal norm institutionalization with universal claims have provoked accusations of being neo-colonial instruments of "the West" (cf. Ayoob 2004). The famous catchphrase "African solutions to African problems" (Ayangafac and Cilliers 2011) explicitly claims regional authority for a self-determined peace and security agenda. On the one hand, centuries long experiences of brutal colonial subjugation motivate strong resistance to interventionist claims from the outside and a strong emphasis on state sovereignty; on the other hand, the obligation to protect human rights norms in the geographical scope of the AU is a genuine concern to it.

The project will first elaborate on the issue of how the AU has developed into a key player in regional security provision and into an international authority, rendering it a potential competitor to the UN, not only a partner. Article 4(h) of the AU's Constitutive Act states that the AU holds the right "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". The AU's vision of its role for maintaining peace and security is furthermore visible in its institutionalization of the "African Peace and Security Architecture" (APSA), a set of various mechanisms for enabling the AU to quickly respond to human rights violations in AU member states, including a Panel of the Wise, a Continental Early Warning System, an African Defense Policy and the establishment of African

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[9] Some argue that the more traditional notion of Pan-Africanism and African brotherhood serve as fertile normative ground for accepting the idea of the R2P (Dembinski and Schott 2014: 11).

Standby Forces (ASF). This process was accompanied by normative developments regarding human rights protection, which in 2004 became manifested in the *Ezulwini Consensus*. Despite the praise of the AU's Constitutive Act for its progressive understanding of human rights protection, the very same legal document also entails strong notions of sovereignty and non-interference into domestic affairs of Member States. Furthermore, the AU is also shaped by a number of member states upholding traditional views of state sovereignty, acting as critical voices in international forums, such as the UN General Assembly (Akonor 2010).

### *Relevant actors and potential interface conflicts in African security governance*

The sub-project seeks to identify interface conflicts[10] and their management between involved key security providers in the settings of military missions in Africa. International authority is usually issue-area specific (cf. Zürn et al. 2012), and the perception of issue areas sets the boundaries of a sphere of authority. This project deals with the issue area "security" in its regional and international dimension. The very notion of "security" has expanded hugely since the 1990s. The broad notion of "human security" and the emerging regional-global security governance arrangements increase the possibilities for interface conflicts. International and national authorities compete for power, influence and recognition. Interface conflicts can arise because of competing interests of involved actors, because of unclear boundaries among individual spheres of authority or because of the clash of recognitions and beliefs. Interface conflicts constitute a particular type of norm conflicts.

Security governance functions in Africa are provided by multiple actors which often have overlapping memberships in differing international organizations. While the UN Security Council holds the supreme authority in international security issues, regional organizations such as the African Union, the League of Arab States, the European Union and NATO also claim authority in providing and coordinating security for their members. In addition, some of the African sub-regional organizations, so-called *Regional Economic Communities* (RECs), have also (to differing extents) adopted security-related functions (see below).

Evidence from pertinent literature suggests that there is a high potential for interface conflicts in the African security governance architecture.[11] The project will analyze to what extent this potential is indeed perceived, articulated and addressed by relevant actors. Regional hegemons such as Nigeria, South Africa, Kenya, Ethiopia, Egypt and Libya under Gaddafi's rule exert substantial influence within the AU and the sub-regional organizations, often maintaining a nation-state-centred view of security (cf. Welz 2014). At the same time, notions of 'African solidarity' and 'African solutions to African problems' provide normative concepts for reframing or concealing national security interests (Fisher 2014: 25). Conflicts within and between security organizations and between member states do not only arise about distributional issues and lack of resources but also about normative issues of legitimacy (of actors or interventions), recognition (of mediators, hegemonic states or violent non-state actors) and differing concepts of the security agenda or of what constitutes a specific region (Witt 2014: 7-12). Western actors can be parties to such conflicts since many (sub-)regional organizations depend on donors but do not necessarily comply with their

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[10] The conceptualization of "vertical and horizontal interface conflicts" has been a joint task of the research group "Overlapping Spheres of Authority and Interface Conflicts in the Global Order" and will not be spelt out in this description of the sub-project.
[11] See Fisher (2014), Franke (2013), Newbery (2014), Vines (2013) and Witt (2013, 2014).

expectations (Fisher 2014: 13-14, 25; Witt 2014: 12). In addition, individual Western 'lead nations' – notably veto powers of the UNSC – such as the United Kingdom and France also shape the emerging African security regime complex through their military interventions (Brosig 2013: 175).

With regard to the UN level, there are conflictive relationships between UN, African regional and sub-regional organizations about the authorization, timing, monitoring and purpose of sanctions and military missions and the inclusion in decision-making procedures. These conflicts are not only about material resources but involve normative struggles, demands for autonomy, justice, legitimacy and recognition among these actors.[12] It is important to note that the UN's supreme authority is not uncontested by the AU, which demands a "flexible and innovative application of the principle of subsidiarity" (cited in Dembinski and Schott 2014: 12). It has implemented a deliberate break with its predecessor's (OAU) strong respect for sovereignty and shifted from the principle of non-interference to that of non-indifference. In adopting a proactive interventionist language in both the Constitutive Act and the PSC Protocol, the African Union indicates to take a different view on the prohibition on the use of force than the UN and to turn to the UN only when the AU deems necessary (Aning and Atoubi 2009: 103-104). Although the subordination of the AU to the UN as supreme authority seems broadly accepted by the regional actors, competition does exist, especially in regard to questions of ownership and legitimacy.

With regard to the interplay between the AU and the sub-regional organizations there exist numerous weaknesses and deficits within the African security architecture that are not only due to a lack of resources. African sub-regional organizations have adopted ever more security functions, in particular ECCAS (Economic Community of Central African States), ECOWAS, IGAD and SADC.[13] However, the record of some AU und ECOWAS operations is rather poor, and the UNSC has not fulfilled its monitoring function (Gelot 2012: 2). The relatively high number of RECs prevents greater harmonization; a lack of a clear division of labour between them and the AU increases potential for conflicts. Perceived from the angle of the AU, the RECs do not seem to be fully committed to AU leadership, whereas the AU is perceived in the regions as sometimes overstepping itself. Some of the RECs are evolving more rapidly than the AU and benefit from a stronger identification of member states with their sub-regional entity. For example ECOWAS has a comparative advantage in West Africa and is often quicker to respond to regional crises. Since the AU claims authority over setting the continental agenda, the results of this competition are uncoordinated interventions and inadequate responses to crises (Vines 2013: 106). Which organization is recognized by whom for what authority claim is thus far from settled. To what extent these conflicts develop into interface conflicts will be analyzed in the project.

In summary, the emerging African Peace and Security Architecture is characterized by a multi-level polycentricity (Franke 2013) that increases confusion and conflicts about authority claims due to lacking clear hierarchies as well as multiple memberships and partly conflicting mandates. The AU plays a key role since it serves as an intermediary between the UN's system of collective security and sub-regional security organizations in Africa. The project will identify in concrete cases (see

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[12] See for such hints Aris (2014: 4), Brosig (2011b: 157), Dembinski and Peters (2014: 20), Gelot (2012) and Vines (2013: 104). Some examples are the conflicts between the African Union and the UN on the Libya intervention and between the African Union and the Arab League on UNSR Resolution 1973 on Libya, and between the African Union and ECOWAS on the resolution on intervention in Cote d'Ivoire in 2011.
[13] Furthermore, the existing RECs do not correspond with the five regions designated by the AU within APSA. A map of overlapping international organizations in Africa is provided in Brosig (2011b: 153).

below) where exactly interface conflicts arise and how these are managed. Furthermore, African peace and security is not only a matter of coordination and contestation among the UN, the AU and the RECs. Other regional organizations such as the League of Arab States and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) that often actively engage in matters regarding Northern Africa also play a crucial role (Glanville 2013). These actors demonstrate the blurring boundaries between regional systems of collective security with powerful external actors such as the EU and NATO intervening by military force. Finally, interface conflicts regarding African peace and security are also structured by a considerable unilateral dimension. This includes important regional African powers, such as Nigeria, South Africa or Ethiopia but also the United Kingdom and France that have a longstanding tradition to intervene in African conflicts and that are key members (veto powers) in the UNSC.

The sub-project addresses the following questions:

- When and where did interface conflicts occur on the vertical level and how did they become manifest? Who shared/who contested this perception of a norm conflict? What are the resources and status of the contending actors involved?
- Were the interface conflicts managed by traditional power politics, by bargaining or by processes of discursive persuasion? Did the conflict parties invoke mediators or administrative bodies to settle the conflict?
- To what extent were these processes norm-referential?
- Were new rules and institutional practices negotiated? Did conflict parties refer to other 'models' that they might imitate? What about the timing of the settlement? Are there 'spoilers' of the settlement process?
- Were there processes of sequencing in the responses of different actors and how precisely did the decision-making in these sequencing processes took place? Were different norms invoked over time by different actors?
- Did the AU or other collective actors adapt their way of coping with these interface conflict throughout the time period under investigation?

### 3. *Envisaged cases and methods of the project*

As has been explained above, the regional focus of the project is on African security governance. Most military interventionist practices related to R2P-cases have taken place in Africa and have involved multiple actors. "The 'rise in regionalism' can be seen most clearly in reference to wars in Africa" (Gelot 2012: 2). The AU, set up in 2002, is a particularly relevant and noteworthy collective actor in the issue area of security since it has, as it were, 'co-evolved' with the human rights-focused establishment of the International Criminal Court (in 2002) and the endorsement of the R2P norm (at the World Summit of 2005). The most controversial international security issue is whether, when, how and for what purposes the use of force should be mandated. Such decisions involve high risks, high costs and uncertain long-term effects. They are taken under high uncertainty but have massive consequences for conflict-affected regions.

The cases to be studied in the sub-project include military missions in *Burundi, Darfur (Sudan), Somalia, Libya, Cote d'Ivoire, Mali, Central African Republic*. The cases cover military interventions/peace operations in the AU's geographical sphere of authority where the use of

military force has been employed with reference to humanitarian concerns *and* where an involvement of the AU, the UN, sub-regional actors or Western regional actors shaped the mandating and implementation of these missions. The legitimization of the use of military force with references to grave human rights violations reflects one of the most crucial and controversial normative developments in global politics since the end of the Cold War. All cases are characterized by a plurality of actors engaging in African peace and security governance. While the AU plays a crucial role, it is neither the only nor the taken-for-granted leader in responding to these conflicts. The boundaries between the various actors' responsibilities are blurred and it is crucial to understand how the actors cope with competing claims for authority, ambiguities and positional differences. In most cases unilateral responses by former colonial powers (UK, France) or emerging regional powers (Nigeria, South Africa, Ethiopia) also structure the interactions between the various actors.

The project's goal is to identify interface conflicts within the African security governance architecture (which includes the UN and non-African actors), to analyze how they have been managed and to classify and assess these responses under normative considerations. The project proceeds in two analytical steps for scrutinizing the occurrence of interface conflicts and the actors' responses:

First, it investigates if and what kind of interface conflicts occur in the set of case studies presented above. Interface conflicts as such are unobservable because they remain dormant until actors activate them via language or behaviour in concrete situations. This implies searching for indicators and evidence that concrete actors *perceive and articulate* situations in which they face conflicting rules originating from overlapping spheres of authority. Such norm collisions are not objectively 'given' but are constructed and also contested by several actors. The APSA includes different types of actors with different resources and status. The power asymmetries within and between collective actors might have an impact on the perception and articulation of norm collisions.

Second, the project focuses on the way the relevant actors responded to these interface conflicts and seeks to explain variation in responses. In line with the overall objective of the OSAIC Research Group the responses will be scrutinized and distinguished according to their referenced norms, institutional settings and the distribution of the outcomes. Studies dealing with specific aspects of the APSA show that both the professionalization and institutionalization have been increasing in recent years (e.g. Witt 2013) so that administrative bodies might be available for being invoked in interface conflicts. Moreover, a key element of APSA is mediation. Numerous mediators have been employed by the AU or the RECs in crisis management in African conflicts. Lacking coordination and competition of mediators undermined some of the efforts; sometimes mediators, unwittingly, even create new conflicts (Vines 2013: 101; Witt 2013). This mixed record notwithstanding, the established tradition of using third parties might also play a significant role in responding to interface conflicts. Finally, many studies show the important role of regional hegemons or individual Western powers that shape the APSA. Their influence in *responding* to specific interface conflicts might thus be crucial as well.

The research project focuses on an issue area (security) where Western and non-Western actors interact closely in post-colonial conflict settings that are impregnated by highly asymmetric power relations. Do centuries old perceptions of domination and exploitation by colonial powers have a

noticeable impact on the perception and articulation of interface conflicts today? The catchphrase "African solutions to African problems" might suggest a certain resonance for references to particularistic norms. However, an analysis of normative conflicts between the UN, the AU and NATO in the case of Libya and of the more congruent positions of the AU, the ECOWAS and the UN in the case of Cote d'Ivoire suggest that notions of procedural and substantial justice play a prominent role in the regional-global security governance arrangements. The demands for respect of self-determination, fair co-determination and ownership were crucial in both cases (Dembinski and Peters 2014).

In order to answer the research questions, the project combines three research methods: process tracing, qualitative content analysis and expert interviews. The empirical analysis will have a special focus on the authorization processes of mandates for the military missions, their extensions, review and alteration. As the short case description has shown, all cases are shaped by the involvement of different types of actors, by change of mandates, mission statements, mission types and partly leadership. Military missions are not founded on a one-shot decision and then 'evolve' somehow, but several actors negotiate such mandates, which are usually authorized for a limited period of time such as 6, 12 or 18 months. After this, the mandates are evaluated, reviewed, extended or terminated. These dynamic evolutions of military deployments and the sequencing of leadership have specific causes in all cases. The assumption is that process tracing of mandating processes, the decision-making, the negotiations between involved actors from different spheres of authorities, public debates (where applicable) will enable us to identify interface conflicts and find evidence for possible responses. While the authorized mandate itself – the final document – creates the impression that claims for authority and that levels of subordination have been clarified for the time being, hints from the literature suggest that written letters and reality can differ considerably. The respective period of analysis for the seven cases will thus start several months prior of the first authorization of a mandate and cover the whole time span of the duration of a mission.

In addition, the researchers will also use qualitative content analysis as a tool for understanding how precisely the interface conflicts become manifest. They will scrutinize a broad range of primary textual resources available on the cases. This includes official AU documents from the AU Peace and Security Council and the AU Assembly, field mission documents as well as press releases, and respective documents from other actors such as sub-regional organizations, EU and NATO. Especially the accessible document archive of the UN is relevant for the project. While the UN, the AU, the EU and NATO provide access to a fairly broad range of documents, this not the case for most African sub-regional organizations. Hence, for gaining a comprehensive insight into the political dynamics and struggles over competencies, expert interviews will be conducted to gain in-depth information on the decision-making processes, ideally enabling us to reveal some of the "hidden" processes as well as to complement the document analysis. Furthermore, expert interviews will also be helpful for identifying conflicts that are not visible or explicit in the official documents. This is especially important with regard to the actual implementation of peace operations. The researchers will therefore do field research in the headquarters of the most relevant collective actors (Addis Ababa, Abuja, Cairo, Djibouti, Brussels, New York) and conduct interviews with staff from the international/regional organizations, from civil society organizations, and also with military staff.

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