

A SEGURANÇA GLOBAL. DESAFIOS E OPORTUNIDADES PARA ÁFRICA

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MODERADORES

GLOBAL SECURITY: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR AFRICA

30 March 2022

INTRODUCTION

The increasing globalization phenomenon and its direct impact on the economy, finance, development, and security shapes the society in which we live. This new reality is associated with a challenging geopolitical context in which organizations and states play a key role in creating security conditions to contribute to society's development, since global security is now of the utmost importance on international agendas.

As a result of the importance of global security, the strategic activities and initiatives carried out by organizations and states become dynamic and interdependent.

Therefore, strategic collaboration between bi and multilateral cooperation involving state and non-state actors becomes more relevant worldwide, especially in the African continent, where the relationship and balance between development and security is fundamental for societies and the rest of the world's contemporary communities.

Main threats affecting businesses and states in Africa.

There are multiple situations considered threats to companies and states in Africa that, consequently, impact society.

Ana Carina Franco focused her intervention on "peace and security issues at the level of Africa's partnerships with the European Union, European Union Member States, USA and other less traditional partners such as Russia, which have supported African states in aspects of security and defense of their territories." As it turns out, there is a stalemate in the partnerships and actions of these external actors in Africa. This largely results from a "willingness and need of some African states to diversify external partners, and the withdrawal (repositioning) of other more traditional ones, e.g. France and to some extent the European Union."

Given the global geopolitical security context, amongst the various risks that exist Luca Bussotti identifies that the "total" and complex risk is the one of war and conflict" more

specifically terrorism, since activities linked to it represent those with the highest fatalities in African countries in the 2020-2021 period. For that reason, Luca Bussotti states that “terrorism represents one of the most serious threats for the African continent today” taking place in several regions of Africa, including Nigeria and Mozambique.

Simultaneously, the resurgence of several coups d'état makes them one of the most common modalities for political change in Africa, thus representing the other face of terrorism. As the base of terrorism, we have the configuration of the African state considered by Luca Bussotti as authoritarian, but also “weak” when it comes to the control of one of the three elements of the state, the territory. This model is defined as authoritarian but weak interesting to analyze, since it has led to popular uprisings such as the Arab Spring and, more recently, to open terrorism in Mozambique. These situations are due precisely to the characteristics of the state, the non-inclusive model that limits the activities of social and political actors and results in fraudulent elections. The reality in this model is the result of, according to the researcher, a submission of intelligence services “to political priorities that aim to protect primarily the figure of the charismatic leader more so than the security of the state.”

In the same line of thought, Miguel Ajú agrees that the lack of security and rule of law as well as the threat of terrorism represent the main threats to companies and states in Africa. However, it is not possible to rule out climate change as one of the main threats that Africa faces today. One just needs to look at what is happening in the Horn of Africa region which includes countries such as Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya that are, according to the United Nations, in an alarming situation due to the impact of drought that aggravates the growing risk of internally displaced persons (IDPs), hunger, and malnutrition, including deaths. This is not a recent situation, after all, the current drought problems were already visible, from the need for humanitarian assistance in Somalia, to the prolonged drought in Ethiopia and Kenya, situations that are not isolated and have been fomenting civil conflicts.

In addition to the above, the existence of domestic and external threats, uncontrolled demographic growth, youth unemployment and ethnic divisions are, according to Miguel Ajú, “undermining the ability of States and Corporations to perform their tasks, ultimately leading to instances of social collapse.”

Ramos da Cruz takes up the idea that the main threats stem from the three elements of the state (territory, sovereignty, population), more precisely from the lack of control of the territory. He also mentions problems such as hunger, noting that the goal of “hunger zero” stipulated in 2014 has been partially or not at all achieved; he also mentions the high foreign debt and the consequent and unsustainable dependence on other States (e.g. China); piracy that jeopardizes economic energy security, this sector being very strategic for national States. Another threat that affects Africans and Africa is corruption, more specifically the issue of wealth squandered by privileged groups calling into question the common good of the populations, and finally, a consequence of the above, the insufficient employment market that is largely due to large migratory movements that lead young people to emigrate and seek better living conditions, resulting in a detriment and flight of skilled labor.

Challenges and opportunities for businesses and states in Africa

In this innovative global security paradigm, to face the current emerging security risks and threats, it is important to analyze and debate the correlation between the main challenges and opportunities facing Africans and Africa. Partnerships with non-continental actors aiming to develop energy diplomacy, which has been absent until now, constitutes both an opportunity and a challenge for the continent. Because it concentrates in itself much diversity and much richness it certainly has a role to play in the diversification of energy sources. Ana Carina Franco highlighted the clear opportunity to finally strengthen energy diplomacy and increase commercial relations in some sectors, such as the supply of cereals, minerals, and other products. Renewable energies, such as solar energy, also have clear potential in the development of this energy and strategic diplomacy, which could counter the still strong exploitation and supply of natural gas from countries like Mozambique or Algeria. Miguel Ajú emphasizes the need for an “unimpeded orderly and judicious exploitation of natural resources that is respectful of the environment, accessible to all legitimate actors, and beneficial to their own and foreign citizens, so that no one feels excluded”. The challenges regarding the economic sector are a consequence, in part, of global security and a weak and parasitic internal capitalism, given that the African continent is not immune to the increase in global inflation, which will lead to significant changes in markets and monetary-financial policies. To this end, it is appropriate to improve trade agreements between foreign public and private entities, such as the EU, which used the EU-Africa summit (in February 2022) to launch the Global Gateway initiative to rival China’s Belt and Road initiative (300 billion EUR worldwide).

From another economic perspective, according to Luca Bussotti, access to credit is one of the biggest challenges, since 70% of the credit requests presented to African banks are not even considered. This is determined by the fact that local banks continue with the Western logic of wanting solid patrimonial guarantees, which most Africans do not have. And such a stance represents a huge obstacle for the informal sector (which constitutes the vast majority of the African economy) or small entrepreneurs to develop their businesses. The constant growth of population in Africa (demographic issues) constitutes an opportunity, because the potential consumer market is getting larger, making investment more alluring, both domestic and foreign; however, if the socioeconomic conditions do not improve, the demographic growth will represent yet another challenge that will be difficult to respond to.

As a result of the economic challenges, industrial development is necessary, as industrialization, including sectors such as tourism, technology, and communications, represents a central element to replace the imports that most African countries still depend on and in this way, invest in human and technological training. In terms of partnerships in the security sector (and/or the security-development nexus), Ana Carina Franco recalls the existence of “the Wagner military group”, whose presence is very significant in the Central African Republic, mostly in mining areas, and with strong ties to the Russian government. There is inherently an easy Russian influence on the policies and strategy of this particular country, making it difficult to discern who the main interlocutors and political actors are. This is then visible in relations between European, African, and American partners. It is the case of the EU missions currently being questioned, for example the European Union Training Missions in the Central African Republic and in Mali, EUTM CAR and EUTM Mali. Africa’s Major Future Contributions to Global Security

As a one and indivisible continental power, Africa can significantly contribute to global security and defense. The contributions focus on several areas and several political actors - States and Companies -, which reveal the increasing importance of this continent on the international scene. Jeffrey Sachs, an American professor and economist at Columbia University, is quoted as saying that “Africa’s importance to global security has increased dramatically in the past two decades”. Luca Bussotti argues that “Africa’s greatest contribution to international stability and peace would be, first of all, a greater stability of the continent’s states themselves”. This does not mean, as is often understood in Western economic literature and authors, to “crystallize” the political situation. Anesthetizing the debate and effectively denying the possibility of an internal democratic game represents the best way to destabilize the African continent. What Africa needs are institutionally stable governments and cultures, with an institutional continuity that goes beyond the primacy of the party in power. At a political-military level, opinions are unanimous regarding consolidating regional security with the participation of African states in multilateral bodies, including sending more African troops in peace support missions which is a strong and important contribution. The standpoints would be to continue to play a role as a credible actor or agency capable of contributing to the development and affirmation of international peace and security norms and policies, specifically through the UN since the assembly is composed of about 27% of African states, strengthening multilateralism. Thirdly, what Africa can offer the world has to do with the role and performance of the African Union, assuming that this organization is not functioning fully. The actions of the African Union, as a regional/continental project, have shown itself, politically and militarily, to be well below expectations. It is pointed out that the inefficiency of this organization is partly the result of external dependence, namely from the European Union. Miguel Ajú is of the opinion that, “African states are also expected to continue with the consolidation of state structures and to achieve their autonomy. That countered by an emphasis on world peace would allow “the African Union to take hold”. In addition to the others, a contribution, little consensual and little discussed, that the African states can give to the international community, is related to the fact of working on food security, in other words, to privilege and develop the primary sector as a field of economic activity related to the production of raw materials, very important for the maintenance of human life and that may become a security problem on a global scale. The main objective would be to take advantage of the continent’s fertile soils and specialize national communities and companies in crops, both endogenous and exogenous. Empowering the populations and companies, through coordinated public policies, would promote agribusiness and, consequently, the entire value chain that would result from it.

The global contribution would consequently focus on changing the cycle of simple production and export of products, replacing it with a complete cycle of production, transformation, and sale of agricultural products.

Conclusion

After the analysis and debate about the main challenges and opportunities that Africans and Africa face in the 21st century, it can be concluded that the main focus should be on multilateralism, more specifically concerning the fight against economic contradictions and competition based on a logic of insurgency and non-coordination in conflicts and external action, and more on cooperation between African states, with shared learning between regions.

Regarding the effectiveness of global security through Africa, the opinions are unanimous, and for that objective to be fulfilled this would be divided into two major objectives and very related contributions: firstly, a rearrangement of the organization of the United Nations in light of the new worldview that has emerged and the new paradigm on which it is based; and secondly, a strengthening of the role of the African Union as a responsible political body, which lacks internal unity and does not function fully in matters of security, defense and peace. The theme expressed here still raises much debate in academic and political society, both its multifacetedness and extreme importance. The multi-variety of African actors will forever remain under intensive study, especially under the purview of defense and security.

Lisboa, 11 de Abril de 2022
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