Peace and security

The peace and security cluster of RCM-Africa is intended to strengthen the capacity of regional and subregional organizations to deal with peace and security, post-conflict reconstruction and development, human rights, justice and reconciliation. It also supports the implementation of the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union. The cluster is divided into four subclusters:

- Africa's peace and security architecture
- Post-conflict reconstruction and development
- Transitional justice
- Emergency preparedness and response

Cluster members:

African Union Commission's Peace and Security Department, the African Union Commission's Department of Political Affairs, the regional economic communities and regional mechanisms, the Economic Commission for Africa, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Labour Organization, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Department of Political Affairs, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Population Fund, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Office to the African Union, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, the World Food Programme and the World Health Organization.

Cluster governance:

The cluster coordinators are Colin Stewart, of the United Nations Office to the African Union, and Admor Kambudzi, of the African Union Commission's Peace and Security Department.

Cluster priorities:

As the cluster co-coordinator, in 2013, the United Nations Office to the African Union engaged the Peace and Security and Political Affairs Departments of the African Union Commission to develop a comprehensive, holistic and practical framework for partnership in peace and security. This approach has been endorsed by the three headquarters departments concerned with peace and security (Department of Political Affairs, Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support) through a 2013 strategic review of the United Nations Office to the African Union, and by a subsequent meeting of the Secretary-General's policy committee. The framework brings together all the key areas of the peace and security cycle, such as building a common understanding between the United Nations, the regional economic communities and regional mechanisms on the root causes of conflict; developing a joint analysis of conflict and agreeing on common approaches to its prevention; and fostering peacekeeping/conflict management and peacebuilding. RCM-Africa and the cluster system will be the overall framework and delivery tool to coordinate and implement the new joint framework for a strengthened United Nations–African Union strategic partnership in peace and security.

Key achievements of the cluster:

- The African peace and security architecture subcluster provided coordinated United Nations support to the AMANI Africa training programme for the African Standby Force, which will run until 2014, and to the development and refinement of African Union policies and guidelines for conflict prevention and peace support operations. At the operational level, it provided support to ongoing African Union engagements such as technical assistance and planning missions in Mali and the Central African Republic and the joint review of the AMISOM operation in Somalia.

- The post-conflict reconstruction and development subcluster has been working on the organization of the first African solidarity initiative, which was endorsed by the Heads of State in July 2012. The African Solidarity Initiative is now scheduled to be held on the margins of the January 2014 Summit; in preparation, the subcluster is supporting AUC with the reproduction of African Union post-conflict reconstruction and development policy in all African Union languages. The subcluster has also worked closely with the governance cluster on the human rights strategy, and with the social and human development cluster on the COMMIT and UNiTE campaigns.

- To help raise awareness about the African Union's humanitarian role and the activities of its partners on the African continent, the emergency preparedness and response subcluster supported the convening of African disaster managers at the Economic and Social Council meeting in July 2013 and the launching of the Helping Hands initiative, and coordinated contributions to the open session of the African Union Peace and Security Council on the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The subcluster actively coordinated United Nations participation in the African Union humanitarian symposium "Beyond assistance: humanitarian challenges and durable solutions in Africa" and supported the African humanitarian champions event that took place on the margins of the 25 September 2013 General Assembly in New York.

- The transitional justice subcluster provided coordination for the work on the African Union Transitional Justice Policy Framework. United Nations agencies, led by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, provided coordinated substantive inputs to the draft, for endorsement at the next session of the African Commission on Human and People's Rights.

- As a result of ongoing advocacy by the peace and security cluster, resolution S/RES/1325 is now popularized, and the protection of civilians, with a focus on children and women, is high on the agenda of the African Union.

For further information, please contact the coordinators, Colin Stewart (stewartC@un.org**) and Admor Kambudzi (**kambudzia@africa-union.org**).**

References: http://www.uneca.org/nepad/pages/regional-coordination-mechanism; http://www.uneca.org/nepad/