African peace processes
Prospects for durable agreements to end conflicts

Friday 14 February | 09:30 – 13:15 EAT

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia | and online via Zoom

The African Union's (AU) 'Silencing the Guns' initiative, a key pillar of Agenda 2063, recognises the imperative of ending conflict for the continent's long-term economic prosperity and sustainable development. Yet these aspirations remain under increased threat as the number of active state-based conflicts in Africa has almost doubled since 2013, increasing from 15 to 28. These escalating conflicts underscore the challenges facing the AU's revised Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) policy, which seeks to address the root causes of violence and support the recovery of affected regions. The incoming chairperson of the AU Commission will inherit this testing landscape, offering a renewed opportunity to reflect critically on existing peacebuilding efforts and consider pathways for reform.

Drawing upon insights from a forthcoming publication as part of a joint Chatham House and UNDP research project on *African Peace Processes: Lessons Learned*, this event will highlight the experience gained from peace negotiations in Africa and assess key factors contributing to the varying durability of peace across the continent. Discussions will focus on the role played by the AU and regional economic communities (RECs) in driving successful outcomes with the input of key partners and public figures, and how such actors can more effectively support conflict resolution and foster sustainable peace in protracted post-conflict transitions.

Agenda

08:30 - 09:30	Registration and refreshments
09:30 – 10:00	**Welcome and opening remarks**
10:00 - 11:15	**Session 1 – What makes a peace process successful?**

    – What makes a peace process successful? Can 'homegrown' peace solutions be more effective than AU, RECs or broader international mediation?

    – Drawing insights from experiences such as the Mozambique peace process, how can African countries sustain high-level commitment to ensure long-term implementation of peace agreements?

    – What strategies can reconcile the trade-offs between rapid conflict cessation and addressing root causes to prevent the recurrence of violence, and what role do multilateral development actors play in fostering sustainable peace and post-conflict recovery?

    – How can peace processes effectively engage civil society, political opposition, women, youth and marginalized groups to ensure broad national ownership without compromising the short-term need for an end to violence?

11:15 - 11:45   Coffee break

11:45 – 13:00   **Session 2 ‑ Strengthening coordination and leadership in African peace processes**

- How can African peace processes overcome challenges of subsidiarity and ensure greater harmonization and coordination among sub-regional actors, regional and continental institutions, the UN and other international players?

- What strategies can reconcile the differing priorities and approaches of the AU, RECs and international actors to ensure coherent and effective peace processes?

- How can robust institutional support and coordinated international backing enhance the selection, composition and effectiveness of mediators, particularly in navigating complex conflicts like Ethiopia's 2020 Tigray war?

- How can African-led mediation efforts balance the use of eminent personalities with building sustainable, institutionalized approaches to peacebuilding?

13:00 – 13:10   **Closing remarks**