Wherever you are, I know the immense uncertainty created by the current COVID-19 pandemic is affecting you deeply, as it continues to cause havoc in all our countries. I pray that you and all your dear ones are safe and healthy in these dire times. Indeed, the world is faced with an unprecedented health, economic and societal crisis. In Africa, as of today, fifty-two (52) countries out of fifty-five (55) African Union Member States have reported cases of the lethal virus, and governments are putting in place urgent measures recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO), the African Centres for Disease Control (African CDC) and national health authorities, to fight the spread of the disease and protect individuals and communities. As the virus continues to hold the world in its grip, there is growing evidence that women and girls are at risk in specific, gendered ways. We must highlight some of these for urgent action.


Cameroon Health Minister gave updates on coronavirus figures weeks after he opted against releasing figures via his Twitter account. The latest figures by Minister Manaouda Malachie indicate a boom in recoveries which now stand at 688. At last count April 23, recoveries were at 397 meaning an increase of 291 had been recorded. He released the figures after a government COVID-19 pandemic assessment meeting on Friday. “Today's statistics show 1,430 people infected, including 692 active, 120 hospitalized and 20 on respiratory assistance. 668 recovered and 43 deaths. We continue to control this virus,” his post read in part. “The numbers are totally confusing. And the differences between these and those in the Ministry of Health official report to partners from two days ago adds to the confusion,” another user chipped in.

### MEMBER TRAINING CALENDAR APRIL - MAY 2020

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### CLICK ON THE HEADINGS TO SEE DETAILS FROM SOURCE


- **KAIPTC**: KAIPTC has resumed operations from 20th April 2020 [https://www.kaiptc.org/kaiptc-resumed-operations-from-20th-april-2020/](https://www.kaiptc.org/kaiptc-resumed-operations-from-20th-april-2020/)

- **IPSS**: Call for papers: Journal of African-
CALL FOR PAPERS: The African Peace Support Trainers Association (APSTA), supported by the Government of the Republic of Cameroon and in collaboration with African Union Commission (AUC), introduces the *Journal of African Conflicts and Interventions* (JACI) and calls for the submission of well researched articles for consideration and subsequent publication. The JACI is a peer-review non-paywalled, diamond open access e-journal, which will publish two (2) issues a year (June and December). Its main objective is illuminating grey areas and recommending better approaches to conflict prevention or capacity building for more effective interventions, towards the attainment of sustainable peace and security, in accordance with the 4th Aspiration of AU Agenda 2063[1]. The need for JACI is informed by APSTA's pre-existing publication: *Comprehensive Review of African Conflicts and Regional Interventions* (CRACRI), which is accessible only to a limited target audience.

The JACI in contrast, provides a wider platform for scholars and experts on conflict studies as well as practitioners to share research findings and experiences and in-depth analysis of conflicts and interventions in Africa. Consequently, it aspires to animate policy-oriented conversations driven by applied research and scholarly case studies that interrogates conflict dynamics and interventions in Africa. A journal of this nature, has hitherto being absent in the African peace and security landscape for far too long. Thus, authors are encouraged to contribute critically and substantively to an increased understanding of the interactions between the contending variables of conflict, capacity and intervention in the continent. Accordingly, the Editorial Board…. comprises seasoned and leading experts drawn from the Academia, Training Centres of Excellence as well as peace and security institutions across the five designated regions of the African Standby Force (ASF). Read More: [http://www.apstaafrica.org/call-for-papers/](http://www.apstaafrica.org/call-for-papers/)

APSTA-POTI E-LEARNING PLATFORM OPENED

Dear Scholar,

We at APSTA earnestly hope that you are keeping safe from the COVID-19 pandemic which has interrupted many global systems, particularly academic and training programmes. However, to bridge some crucial gaps in training and capacity building, our new APSTA-POTI online e-learning portal makes it possible for you to take and get certified on several peace and security courses of your choice from the comfort of your home. These courses are quintessential qualifications for your cherished peace and security career at national and international levels.

The Peace Operations Training Institute is pleased to partner with the African Peace Support Trainers Association (APSTA) to provide e-learning on peacekeeping courses at no cost. POTI offers courses in English, French, and Spanish, as well as others in Arabic and Portuguese. Personnel from African Peace Support Trainers Association may download all course materials, study their courses offline, take each self-scoring End-of-Lesson Quiz, and when they are ready, take the online End-of-Course Examination. Students who pass the examination with a minimum of 75 % receive a Certificate of Completion for each course.

[Read More:](https://www.peaceopstraining.org/programs/ntcelp/africa/apsta/)
The United Nations Department of Global Communications (DGC) promotes global awareness and understanding of the work of the United Nations. Clearly, we must fight the virus for all of humanity, with a focus on people, especially the most affected: women, older persons, youth, low-wage workers, small and medium enterprises, the informal sector and vulnerable groups – Secretary-General António Guterres. In a report published earlier this week, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) points out that disease outbreaks affect women and men differently, and pandemics make existing inequalities for women and girls worse. With women representing 70 percent of the health and social sector workforce globally, special attention should be given to how their work environment may expose them to discrimination, as well as their sexual and reproductive health and psychosocial needs as frontline health workers, the report says. In times of crisis, women and girls may be at higher risk of intimate partner violence and other forms of domestic violence due to increased tensions in the household.


**ECONOMIC IMPACT OF CORONAVIRUS THREATENS HARD-WON PROGRESS ACROSS AFRICA’S GREAT LAKES REGION**

Sweeping preventative measures seem to be curbing the spread of COVID-19 in the Great Lakes region of Africa, but the economic impact of the global pandemic threatens hard-won gains made along the long road back to peace and stability, the Secretary-General’s Special Envoy for the region said on Wednesday. Briefing the Security Council during open videoconference proceedings, Huang Xia urged the international community not to let up on its support for the continent-spanning region that includes Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, South Sudan and Uganda, among several other nations. Citing data from the World Health Organization (WHO), the Special Envoy said that the novel coronavirus has so far claimed 131 lives in the Great Lakes region among more than 4766 confirmed cases – but is spreading at a “moderate rate” compared to other parts of the world. Read More: https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/04/1062422
UN RIGHTS CHIEF REJECTS KILLINGS ACKNOWLEDGED BY CAMEROON, AND IRAN'S EXECUTION OF CHILD OFFENDERS

The UN's human rights chief has been weighing in on recent killings committed by State authorities, or by rogue members of State military forces, emphasizing that all Governments must strictly abide by international law and hold those who serve, accountable for any violations. In a statement released on Wednesday, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, welcomed the acknowledgement by the Government of Cameroon – following a national investigation – that members of its military were involved in the deaths of at least 13 people in a village in the country's northwest region, as well as the announcement of new legal proceedings against them. Meanwhile, in a separate statement, she condemned the execution of two prisoners under the age of 18 by Iranian authorities. Violence and panic in Cameroon: Allegations began to circulate in February that three Cameroonian soldiers were involved in the killing of members of an armed separatist group, along with others, in the village of Ngarbuh, in the country’s northwest. Hundreds of thousands have been displaced there in recent years by clashes between national forces and separatists.


UN SCALING UP COVID-19 RESPONSE TO PROTECT REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

The United Nations Department of Global Communications (DGC) promotes global awareness and understanding of the work of the United Nations. Born in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Kituza was kidnapped one night in 2008, after rebels attacked her hometown, raped her and killed her parents. She was only 16.

“When my parents tried to help me, the rebels killed them,” says Kituza, now 25, wiping tears from her eyes and clutching a doll. “Then they took me to a forest with five other women.” She adds that they were held for a long time in a small grass house in the forest, where they were continuously tortured and raped. “I got pregnant and gave birth there,” she says. She eventually escaped to Mozambique and settled in Maratane, a refugee camp in Nampula province that hosts about 9,000 refugees, mainly from the DRC and Burundi.

'FULLY MOBILIZED' TO SUPPORT THE SUDANESE PEOPLE, SECURITY COUNCIL HEARS

The “exceptional circumstances” of the COVID-19 pandemic have impacted the peace process in Sudan as well as the drawing down of the United Nations mission there, the head of UN peacekeeping updated the Security Council on Friday.

Notwithstanding the “dire” situation, Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, Jean-Pierre Lacroix, assured the Council via video tele-conferencing that the UN is “fully mobilized” to continue supporting the Sudanese people. Noting progress on political reforms, accountability and women's participation in decision-making, he said that “the Sudanese authorities and people have pushed ahead” with implementing their democratic transition. But, citing a March assassination attempt against Prime Minister Abdallah Hamdok, he informed that Sudan's trajectory change remains fragile.


UN AND PARTNERS ACTING TO AVERT CORONAVIRUS SPREAD IN DISPLACEMENT CAMPS

The UN system in Nigeria and its partners are working to reduce the spread of the new coronavirus disease in some of the most vulnerable areas in the country: communities and camps housing millions of internally displaced people (IDPs) uprooted by the Boko Haram insurgency in the northeast. Teams are supporting authorities in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe (BAY) states in developing emergency response plans that take into account the living conditions in many communities and IDP camps, where overcrowding can increase the risk of disease outbreaks.

“Humanitarian partners are installing hand-washing stations in IDP camps and ensuring supply of clean water. Partners are also distributing soap and teaching women how to produce their own,” said Edward Kallon, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator in Nigeria.

“More than ever, it is crucial for vulnerable people to have access to not only water, soap, shelters, but also food, education and protection.”

COVID-19 is likely to disrupt ongoing peace processes, worsen existing conflicts and generate new conflicts. But it may also offer opportunities for ceasefires and peace agreements. The measures taken to contain the spread of the virus are, unfortunately, also affecting the mobility of peacemakers, peacekeepers and peacebuilders. At least 22 African countries are experiencing political violence. Countries like Nigeria, Cameroon, Somalia, Libya, South Sudan, and DR Congo are experiencing high intensity armed conflicts between armed opposition groups and national governments.

There are peacebuilding efforts in most of the countries that are currently experiencing armed conflict and that have recorded cases of COVID-19. These efforts variously involve the support of international donors, nongovernmental organizations and national governments. The secretary-general of the United Nations recently called for a unilateral ceasefire in ongoing conflicts. But achieving a multilateral ceasefire might be difficult. Some warring factions will seize the opportunity to gain an advantage. The challenges are immense. The pandemic could worsen the conflict situation and undermine ongoing peacebuilding efforts.

On the other hand, disasters can transform conflict dynamics. Research shows that disasters such as COVID-19 can create opportunities for peace in conflict countries. For one, they can undermine the ability of conflict entrepreneurs to access conflict areas. This reduces incidents of violence. They can also create the conditions necessary for advancing peacebuilding processes in local communities. To achieve this outcome peacebuilders, need to engage with local actors.

The impact of the pandemic

Peace processes supported by the international community are designed to involve multiple stakeholders. Even when described as locally led initiatives they are often guided by internationally recruited professionals. The global response to COVID-19 in the African countries affected by conflict is hampering the movement of international and national peacebuilders. These professionals have been unable to travel to conflict zones. International organizations have placed movement restrictions on their staff. Many of them have returned to their home countries. At the national level, restrictions have prevented people from congregating and limited their ability to travel.

Peacebuilding requires sustained efforts towards reconciliation and reintegration. Actors must address the impact of conflict and the causes of conflicts. This process often requires physical meetings and events that are designed to bring conflict actors together towards sustainable peace. Retreating peacebuilding activities during this period portends a great danger for societies affected by violent conflicts. One likely consequence is that non-state armed groups will use the opportunity to expand their frontiers, thus undermining ongoing peace processes. It also opens up the possibility of increased mortality in the context of violent conflicts. Hence, it is important that stakeholders adopt mechanisms that will sustain peacebuilding efforts in communities affected by violent conflicts during this pandemic.
Local actors are key

In the face of national lockdowns, one way the momentum can be maintained is through existing local authorities, community peace actors and peace committees. These are common across Africa. Local actors that are embedded in communities can continue to work on sustaining peace processes even when professional peacebuilders are unable to gain access. For any peace process, what is important is that people keep communication open and sustained even during the pandemic. And international peacebuilders can continue providing support to their local counterparts. This can be through funding to facilitate activities in local communities. International peacebuilders can also provide remote mentoring and capacity building. There is technological capacity for peacebuilders to receive coaching in the most remote areas affected by conflict in Africa. International peacebuilders should also remain available to brainstorm with nationals when challenges are encountered. Local peacebuilders can be enlisted to stop the spread of the pandemic through their existing networks and knowledge of community relations to coordinate preventive responses. These resources can also be used to reinforce the expertise of public health workers in local communities. Local actors involved in peacebuilding already have experience translating complex messages into local languages. This skill is very relevant in the fight against the pandemic in communities.

Desired outcome

With the right information, local conflict actors can be persuaded to accept the UN's call for a ceasefire. But this won't happen unless local actors are involved in crafting the right messages. Empowering local actors will not only sustain peace processes, but also contribute to the fight against the spread of COVID-19. To sustain peace, we would need to find new ways of working, by meaningfully including national and local capacities for peace. Source: https://allafrica.com/stories/202004270753.html Read also at: http://www.apstaafrica.org/africa-how-to-ensure-that-coronavirus-doesnt-stop-peace-efforts-in-africa/

PRESS CONFERENCE ON THE LAUNCH OF THE AFRICA CDC KOFI ANNAN GLOBAL HEALTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

The Governing Board of the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention in March 2018, approved the establishment of the Kofi Annan Public Health Leadership Programme at Africa CDC to honor his leadership and contribution in establishing the Global Fund for AIDS, TB and Malaria. In adherence to this mandate, the leadership of the African Union Commission and the Africa CDC will launch this initiative on Monday, 25 May 2020 in commemoration of this year's Africa Day celebration.

The Deputy Chairperson of the Commission will perform the launching ceremony and address the media highlighting the vision of the program and its anticipated impact on Africa's health security. Championing a new public health order is necessary to truly safeguard all Africans from myriad threats to health and economic security in Africa. However, many African public health institutions lack leaders with a depth of programmatic experience and skills to effectively transform their institutions into efficiently managed, world class technical entities.....

PEACEKEEPING THIS MONTH – APRIL 2020

The APSTA “Peacekeeping This Month” is an Online Journal for interested institutions and individuals to express informed opinion or share perspectives on all matters peacekeeping, peace operations or peace support operations (PSOs). The secretariat wishes to take this opportunity to invite all interested. During the month of April-May 2020, in the midst of Corona virus, we were able to cover stories in Africa on peacekeeping as follows:

**Liberia: Ebola contact tracing lessons inform COVID-19 response**
Authors: UNFPA- Health
Date: 24 April 2020

**UN peacekeepers killed in improvised explosive attack in Mali**
Authors: UN Peace and Security:

**COVID-19: UN teams step up efforts to protect rights in prisons, as revolts intensify worldwide**

"AU and UN appeal for stable and peaceful environment for Burundi elections"
Authors: AU Peace and Security

"Battle not yet over against locust invasions in East Africa and Yemen"
Authors: WFP Humanitarian Aid
Date: 11 May 2020

**Food insecurity in West Africa could leave 43 million at risk as coronavirus hits**
Authors: AU Peace and Security/Health
Date: 11 May 2020

**Attacks on civilians, arbitrary arrests, top list of abuses in Libya: ICC Prosecutor**
Authors: AU Peace and Security
Date: 11 May 2020

Click on the heading to view details of each post from the APSTA website or partner institutions.
Call for Membership

The Association has been reformed and strengthened during the transition period (2017-2019), with support from the Government of Cameroon, including the relocation of the permanent executive secretariat from Nairobi Kenya to Yaounde Cameroon. During the transition period, the Association acquired a diplomatic status congruent with its functions as a continental organization. The number of active Member Institutions (MIs) of APSTA which reduced during the transition period due mainly to financial constraints experienced by most of these Members, already show prospects of rapid increase, following a barrage of new requests for membership in 2019. However, APSTA retains its continental coverage and legitimacy.

In pursuit of its vision of a peaceful and stable Africa, APSTA welcomes all like-minded institutions and organizations to join and partner with the Association, to achieve a common worthy cause: “an Integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa.”

Benefits of Membership

- With a current active membership of 16 leading Policy Research Institutions and Training Centres of Excellence, the Association is a potential platform for collaboration in a wide range of issues relating to African peace and security, and for networking and exchange of programmes in that regard

- The AU-APSTA Memorandum of Understanding established since 2008 makes the Association one of the key implementing partners of the AU Commission in the areas of capacity building, policy research and policy implementation support to the AU in relevant areas of the policies and programmes of the African Peace and Security Architecture

- Membership of the Association provides tremendous opportunities for collaborative engagement with the AU Commission and other structures of the AU. Membership may also come with the possibility of funding support from the AU, through the EU Capacity Building Support to African Training Centre

Find out more from the APSTA Website
http://www.apstaafrica.org/member-institutions/
APSTA Vision, Mission, Main objective & Core Values

Vision
“To be the Premier independent Pan-African Association promoting a peaceful and stable Africa”

Mission
“APSTA exists to facilitate the development of African capacity for peace and security through coordination, advocacy, harmonization and standardization of training, research and policy implementation support among its member institutions”

Main Objective
“To facilitate the development of African capacity for peace and security through coordination, advocacy, harmonization and standardization of training, research and policy implementation support among member institutions, towards a peaceful and stable Africa”

Core Values

Peace & security: APSTA undertakes to perform its work with the greater aim of enhancing peaceful coexistence and human security in Africa and the world

Respect for diversity: APSTA is committed to all forms of diversity, including colour, culture, education, religion, languages and gender

Pan-Africanism: APSTA subscribes to African unity and continental goals and recognises that it is African by identity but universal in outlook, thus open to learning from others as well

Professionalism: APSTA will work with staffs that is skilled, well trained and have the right attitude

Human dignity: APSTA Subscribes to and supports the UN values concerning human rights and human security

Apolitical: APSTA will strive to keep out of politics and its influence, especially in its day-to-day management of its affairs and work