

The Tswalu Dialogue was established in 2002 as a premier African forum to discuss issues of concern to continental development and security. The 2007 Dialogue focused on the likely roles, shape and structure of the African military of the twenty-first century. There are a number of reasons why this topic is important. First, security and stability is an essential prerequisite to development. Second, there remain security threats to a large number of African countries and many African militaries face short- or medium-term threats. Third, the African Union (AU) has undertaken to perform a range of security-related tasks on the continent, including diplomacy, peace support operations and humanitarian assistance. The African Standby Force (ASF) introduces, in this regard, another important aspect of co-operation in organizational and doctrinal matters. Fourth, the number of democracies in Africa has increased substantially over the past quarter-century, raising new challenges about the practice of civil-military relations. And fifth, there are related concerns about the ability of African militaries – like their counterparts elsewhere – to deal with twenty-first century security issues: notably, terrorism, rebuilding failed states, and employing the appropriate technological tools.

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The African Military in the 21st Century

Report of the 2007 Tswalu Dialogue

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