



Russian and Chinese Influence in Africa:

Power Asymmetries and the Threat to African Union Agency in Global Governance

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AOSIS	Alliance of Small Island States
AU	African Union
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa
CAR	Central African Republic
FOCAC	Forum on China-Africa Cooperation
G20	Group of Twenty
OAU	Organization of African Unity
PMSC	Private Military Security Contractors
PSC	Peace and Security Council
UN	United Nations
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
US	United States

Key Findings and Implications

On Chinese and Russian presence in Africa and the associated implications on African Union (AU) autonomy:

- ▶ The AU has become reliant on funding from external partners in part due to a lack of internal funding from Member States. The AU recognises the need to address this imbalance to shield itself from unsustainable aid dependencies that threaten African interests and organisational autonomy. Efforts are underway to explore various mechanisms to increase AU financial independence, for example, the use of import duties from non-Member States.
- ▶ AU roles and objectives are often overlooked or in conflict with positions held by individual AU Member States who have bilateral agreements with Russia and China, diminishing the AU's credibility and reducing its ability to not only set but also follow through with an agenda that reflects cohesive interests. The AU has implemented structural reforms to address these coordination challenges to deploy a more unified voice under the oversight of AU Partnerships Coordination and Interactive Platform. Moreover, the AU has established partnerships with entities like the European Union (EU) and United Nations (UN) that recognise its leadership role for the Continent and now seeks to institutionalise its relationships with China and Russia.

On leveraging AU influence to advance global governance while protecting continental values:

- ▶ Although the AU has the potential to yield significant influence and has made inroads in obtaining recognition and enhanced collaborative influence in certain international settings, it remains without equivalent agency in security decision-making at the intergovernmental level. Power influences have resulted in a fragmented AU in the global governance arena, at times directly contradicting the foundational values the AU agreed to uphold.

Introduction

While the concept of global governance was developed from principles around regulatory action for the common good, inherent power dynamics between states challenge its efficacy. Hard and soft power dynamics continue to influence global governance, enabling powerful states to leverage dominance over developing nations, particularly those that harbour distinct reserves of natural resources and human capital, and hold favourable positions in geopolitics. Russia and China's significantly increasing physical presence and influence – economically, militarily and politically – across Africa, primarily since the early-to-mid 2000s, has resulted in their transition from the sidelines to their status as great powers. This timeframe also allows for examination of how these relations have translated into evolving voting patterns at the United Nations (UN), further demonstrating evidence of shifting diplomatic alignments. This report seeks to demonstrate how growing Russian and Chinese influence undermines African Union (AU) autonomy, particularly as it relates to its ability to embody a unified voice and agency in global politics. As military cooperation deals are being secured and foreign investment is funnelling in, AU Member States are being incentivised by China and Russia to favour self-interest above collective AU pursuit. Despite this undermining of AU autonomy, there are ways that the AU is seeking to strengthen its autonomy and counter influence from Russia, China, and other international actors.

1. Power Dynamics in Global Governance

Global governance is predicated on fundamental liberal values, such as democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, with the goal of creating a more harmonious and thriving world.¹ As such, it relies on democratic processes and ideals to identify and manage collective solutions to global challenges. While promoting conflict resolution and finding common purpose, a liberal framework for global governance does not fully account for the inherent power differentials amongst and between international states, thus overlooking how global life is organised, structured, and regulated.² The inclusion of power and influence into the concept of global governance broadens its scope to address the legitimacy of governing systems, determining which entities can participate, whose voice is heard, and whose vote carries influence.³ Recognising these power dynamics enhances our understanding of how global outcomes at the state, individual, and institutional level are shaped, and how different actors are either empowered or constrained in determining their fates and exercising autonomy.⁴

Global governance scholars Barnett and Duvall identify four forms of power necessary to comprehensively evaluate the influence of global governance at a geopolitical scale: compulsory, institutional, structural, and productive.⁵ Compulsory power, through direct control of one actor by another, is 'hard power' global strategy, consistent with the use of coercive means to compel others to act. On the other hand, institutional, structural, and productive forms of power are 'soft power' tactics that employ persuasion, attraction, manipulation, and deception to exert influence. These combinations of power dynamics continue to influence global governance and are often leveraged by powerful states to assert dominance, particularly over developing nations with valuable natural or human capital and strategic positions, both in terms of physical location and political sway in the global arena. This interplay has long infiltrated African governance amid shifting global power structures, and is explored through the lens of contemporary Chinese and Russian engagement with AU Member States in the following sections.

2. Contemporary Evolution of African Governance

Africa is home to approximately 30% of the world's mineral resources and significant reserves of oil, gas, coal, and renewable energy sources.⁶ The 48,000 kilometres of coastline in Africa hold some of the world's most strategic sea lanes, providing immense shipping, trade, and security advantages.⁷ Port development, leases for military bases, and resource extraction facilities are engines for economic growth at regional, national, and local levels, driving trade, generating revenue, creating jobs, and fostering infrastructure development. Considering Africa's immense natural resources, untapped economic potential, and growing youth population, Africa has become a major player in global politics, with international actors vying to increase activities in the region to advance strategic, geopolitical, and economic development objectives. While external actors have deepened ties with Africa and its immense strategic benefits, Africa has also worked to unify the 'divided continent and individual countries' post-independence and capitalise on its own wealth.⁸

In 1963, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) was established with the vision for a united, free, and autonomous Africa, aimed at eradicating all forms of colonialism while promoting solidarity, coordination, and cooperation.⁹ By 2002, the OAU mandate was not sufficient to support Africa's emerging need to shift priorities towards claiming its role in the global arena in order to drive growth and economic development by its own citizens.¹⁰ Thus, the OAU evolved to become the AU, providing the institutional framework for African governments to develop common positions and to speak on behalf of its 55 Member States in international forums to advance cooperation, defend its interests, and seek mutually beneficial global partnerships and alliances.¹¹ Popular participation is identified within the Constitutive Act of the AU¹² as the cornerstone of the AU's approach to governance.¹³ However, in reality, the process often involves prioritising a subset of Member States over others and limited participation in deliberations that lack transparency and full Member State inclusion.¹⁴

Further contradictions between AU governance theory and practice are evident in the fragmented objectives between the AU mandate and Member State interests.¹⁵ African influence in global governance relies heavily on the AU's ability to maintain a unified voice between its Member States, backed by consensus around AU strategic priorities. The polarisation between the collective objectives of the AU and the realities and priorities of its Member States erodes the efficacy of the AU's position as a governing body in global politics. Furthermore, because many Member States do not financially contribute to the AU, the AU is reliant on funding from external partners.¹⁶ This funding dynamic

deteriorates AU ownership and enables external actors to exert undue influence over AU agenda-setting,¹⁷ resulting in a chasm between theory and practice. African unity and solidarity, considering this external interference, are critical to the objectives and ability to exercise relevant legal instruments of the AU.

Rooted in Pan-Africanism and its revitalisation of 'African renaissance,' the AU aims to achieve political and economic independence, self-reliance, and self-determination, while also securing the AU's position in the global governance arena.¹⁸ By 2063, the AU aspires to arm Africa with the means and resources to drive its own development, and ensure sustainable and long-term stewardship of its resources.¹⁹ AU objectives focus on building Africa from within by ensuring the participation of its people and mobilising African resources to finance and accelerate its own socio-economic development.²⁰ Promotion of Intra-African trade via efforts such as the African Continental Free Trade Agreement,²¹ in combination with fiscal mechanisms to reduce unsustainable levels of debt and aid dependencies from external partners,²² will be used to amplify the growth of Pan-African companies.²³

In terms of security, the AU strives to secure peace and protect its citizens through Agenda 2063 objectives such as 'silencing' guns and ending all wars occurring within the Continent.²⁴ The Common African Defence and Security Policy reaffirms the AU's leadership role in maintaining peace and security in Africa through preventive diplomacy and responsive intervention.²⁵ To implement the policy, the AU created a Peace and Security Council (PSC) as the standing decision-making organisation. It is tasked with responsibilities such as ensuring alignment between external initiatives related to peace and security occurring within the continent and AU objectives and priorities.²⁶ This includes the establishment of the Military Staff Committee and African Standby Force for advisory assistance and rapid deployment respectively.²⁷ However, the PSC's ability to act is increasingly challenged by the growing number of foreign militaries in Africa.²⁸ This further demonstrates how AU institutions, processes, and systems are predicated on principles that are centred on benefiting Africa, by Africa, but in practice may not function as such as a result of external forces on African soil.

As a collective, African nations have the potential to yield significant influence globally. Within the UN General Assembly (UNGA), the AU Member States, referred to as the 'Africa Group,' hold 28% of the votes and three non-permanent members of the UN Security Council (UNSC).²⁹ However, more than 60% of topics discussed by the UNSC pertain to Africa and its 1.3 billion inhabitants.³⁰ Given this discrepancy, the AU adopted 'The Common Position on the Reform of the Security Council,' known as the Ezulwini Consensus, which calls for two permanent seats on the UNSC inclusive of existing privileges, including veto power, to be allocated to African nations.³¹ China, Russia, and the other Permanent Five members of the UNSC, who have existing veto power, have supported the idea of permanent African seats at different stages, but that support has excluded veto power.³² The consensus was adopted in 2005 with continued efforts to pursue UNSC reforms, which have been largely unsuccessful.

However, there are several achievements to note. Prior to adopting UNSC Resolution 2719 in 2023, the UNSC would provide AU missions with access to UN assessed contributions on an 'exceptional basis'.³³ Resolution 2719 has been hailed as a 'historical step' in strengthening the relationship between the UN and AU by providing guidance for joint UN-AU planning and authorisation to help regularise the process of accessing contributions.³⁴ Some scholars maintain that the AU has shifted the UNSC's primary role in maintaining international peace and security by reinterpreting the norm of UNSC primacy from a hierarchical relationship to one based on partnership and consultation, even without gaining permanent seats.³⁵ Further, in 2023, the AU obtained permanent member status to the Group of Twenty (G20) to officially join international economic and financial stability discussions. Despite significant progress to strengthen the AU's role and influence, the AU remains in a weaker position compared to the five permanent UN members in security decision-making at the intergovernmental level, even regarding cases occurring within their Member States. Additionally, independent African nations' existing relationships and dependence on powerful states undermine the AU's ability to conduct autonomous, independent policy and decision-making.

3. Shifting Global Power Dynamics

Leveraging hard power tactics, Western powers have dominated the world stage through hegemonic manifestations such as colonialism and imperialism, relying on the establishment of institutions, systems, and processes to assert and maintain economic, military, and political dominance.³⁶ In the wake of World War II, Western nations sought to establish a more stable economic global system, leading to the creation of international institutions including the United Nations (UN), International Monetary Fund, and World Trade Organization. While some scholars posit that the inclusion of certain UN objectives were profoundly influenced by Global South actors, such as Latin American models of human rights protection and perspectives,³⁷ these institutions largely reflected Western values, such as democracy and market capitalism.

In the following decades, the global arena has witnessed a significant shift from Western hegemony toward a growing influence of emerging countries, particularly Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS).³⁸ In 2019, the BRICS' Gross Domestic Product of \$18.8 trillion USD claimed about 23% of the gross world product, and 40% of global gold and hard currency reserves.³⁹ Further, the BRICS have positioned themselves as 'alternative partners or patrons' of other states, primarily exhibited through China's economic influence and Russia's military reassertion and, to a lesser extent, India and Brazil.⁴⁰ This transformation has opened new avenues for these powers to 'assert their respective policy formulations in line with their own distinctive values and worldviews, making them more able to shape the current world order to benefit their own geopolitical interests.'⁴¹ This is particularly evident in geostrategy focused on developing nations within the Global South, and is arguably most prevalent across the continent of Africa due to its abundance of natural resources and its critical position in global trade and geopolitics.

Russia and China have made inroads into African nations by capitalising on Western influence fatigue and a positional void left behind from the United States (US) and Europe becoming increasingly disengaged.⁴² American soft power, for example, has taken a significant blow, with Chinese and Russian popularity now rising above that of the US, in part, due to their 'willingness to trade in arms and in material support at levels at which the U.S. has thus far been unwilling to engage'.⁴³ Further, both the US and EU have pursued agreements with Africa that push for, or even require adherence to, normative policy goals in the areas of human rights, the rule of law, and democratic reforms for eligibility of receiving trade benefits.⁴⁴ However, neither China nor Russia has analogous mandates in their agreements.⁴⁵

Russia has exerted its dominance through a combination of hard and soft power displays of military presence and defence diplomacy, while China frequently applies soft power strategies to drive competition in sectors including trade, investment, and tourism.⁴⁶ Russia and China's growing influence and competition is impacting Africa's governance, security, and legitimacy at the local, regional, and global scale. As the continental body formally representing the collective Member States of the African Continent, the AU has shown limited efficacy in resisting external interference and faces growing pressure by these powerful states to align with specific positions.⁴⁷ Additionally, bilateral relationships between individual African states and China or Russia often prevent the AU from priority-setting, decision-making, and policy alignment, which serves to undermine broader AU economic development and security objectives across the Continent. Thus, the AU's autonomy in global governance faces significant threat and uncertainty largely due to China and Russia's economic and military fortitude.

4. China and Russia's Growing Influence in Africa and AU Engagement

4.1. China

China has emerged as Africa's single largest country trade partner and major creditor,⁴⁸ providing a 'no strings attached' approach viewed by many nations as more attractive than conventional Western-tied aid models.⁴⁹ During the 2024 Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) summit, China pushed back on Western democratic models and modernisation processes, while making financial promises of more than \$50 billion USD over the next three years for a complex, long-term, and expanded Chinese vision.⁵⁰ The AU's role in global governance has gained more traction through the FOCAC,⁵¹ a forum centred on commercial relations among a wider range of actors, including numerous sectors from both regions seeking opportunities.⁵² The AU became a FOCAC permanent member in 2011, nearly 12 years after the FOCAC partnership was established, and has since been vocal about promoting its agenda for the collective good over the emphasis on bilateral agreements between China and individual African states.⁵³

AU-China relations evolved in parallel with AU internal reforms based on a set of organisational recommendations by Rwandan President Paul Kagame in 2017.⁵⁴ Among the criticism highlighting the AU's inadequate responses to issues including climate change and terrorism, the recommendations also presented a number of priorities, including a clear division of labour between the AU and its Member States and improved organisational efficiency impacting AU's management of external relations.⁵⁵ The latter included changes in the structure of partnership summits, such as FOCAC, to deploy a more unified African voice⁵⁶ under the new oversight of the AU Partnerships Coordination and Interactive Platform.⁵⁷ This suggests that challenges with maintaining consistency and alignment among AU Member States have negatively impacted external negotiations, resulting in the proposed reforms to address the power gap between AU-China relations.⁵⁸ However, despite seemingly making inroads, hierarchical power relations continue to dampen AU agency in FOCAC dialogues. As a response to the 2024 FOCAC summit, the Africa Center for Strategy Studies stated, '[w]hile FOCAC has emerged as a unique forum, it is still by-and-large shaped by a donor-recipient dynamic, where African countries mostly take a back seat while China initiates much of the agenda.'⁵⁹ Moreover, some contend that while the FOCAC summits promote the ideal of multilateralism, in practice, they serve as a hierarchical platform for bilateral relations, with China's role being the 'older brother', demonstrating the struggle of achieving equity between China and the AU.⁶⁰

China's presence in Africa spans diplomatic, security, and economic sectors, encompassing the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI),⁶¹ Global Development Initiative,⁶² and the Global Security Initiative.⁶³ The BRI accelerated the number of infrastructure projects and loans, with \$46.8 billion USD concentrated on African transport in 2020 alone.⁶⁴ While these projects bring resources into the region, they are funded by Chinese loans, realised by Chinese companies, and largely staffed by Chinese workers, and paid back with oil or other raw materials,⁶⁵ countering AU's vision of driving growth and economic development by 'its own citizens'.⁶⁶ For those countries without sufficient natural resources, these projects contributed to substantial external debt.⁶⁷ The agreements have often been described as 'opaque,' 'lacking transparency,' and imposing questionable confidentiality clauses that appear 'predatory in nature'.⁶⁸ While some African nations have created manageable debt arrangements, many have faced mounting debt and challenges in meeting repayment obligations. Zambia and China have engaged through bilateral agreements for decades, including mining access to copper, gold, and manganese resources, and BRI projects developing a railway, airports, among others.⁶⁹ In 2021, Zambia's debt to China's financiers was \$6.6 billion, with 70% of these loans funding economic infrastructure projects.⁷⁰ This dynamic has broader policy autonomy and geopolitical implications due to China's threat of withdrawing investment as a result of the Zambian opposition recognising Taiwan in 2018.⁷¹ Considering the scale of its BRI investments across Africa, China faces reputational risk and further challenges to maintain positive relations with the AU as a result of how China chooses to handle forcing repayment by AU Member States.⁷²

4.2. Russia

Since the mid-2000's, Russia's reengagement with Africa has been narrower in scope than China's, primarily focused on arms sales, bilateral military agreements, and the deployment of Private Military Security Contractors (PMSC).⁷³ Russia's return has coincided with US disengagement across the continent, with recent orders for US military forces to withdraw from African states including Niger⁷⁴ and Chad.⁷⁵ A Russia-Africa summit was held in 2019, and again in 2023, with 17 heads of African states attending the latter and resulting in numerous bilateral agreements including the establishment of a new permanent security mechanism to combat terrorism and extremism.⁷⁶ Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and Chairman of the AU also planned to hold political consultations considering the growing number of foreign militaries in-situ and the PSC's responsibilities to uphold peace and conflict resolution.⁷⁷

While some African states including Algeria and Egypt have started to reduce their defence ties with Russia, these are likely to be outliers.⁷⁸ Russia has become the lead supplier and importer of major arms, supplying 40% of arms across Africa.⁷⁹ Russian PMSCs are operating in at least 31 African countries, the most well-known being the Wagner Group,⁸⁰ providing political strategy and military training and services sometimes in exchange for economic concessions.⁸¹ For example, Mali enlisted the help of the Wagner Group as an alternative to the existing military efforts of Western influence,⁸² strengthening political relations and resulting in a combination of substantial monthly payments and mineral extraction rights for Russia.⁸³ Russia's engagement has also expanded to the Maghreb region, deepening its influence with individual AU Member States situated on the Mediterranean and their associated resources.⁸⁴ Russia rebranded the Wagner Group in Africa as the 'African Legion',⁸⁵ which is expected to expand operations in Burkina Faso, the Central African Republic (CAR), Mali, and Niger as a subordinate to Russia's Ministry of Defence.⁸⁶

One example highlighting the depth of Russia's infiltration of security forces within AU Member States involves the CAR. Mounting insecurity, violence, and human rights abuses by armed groups⁸⁷ spurred the CAR government to deploy Wagner operations in 2018. In the year prior, the AU began mediation efforts between the CAR government and armed groups, ultimately resulting in a signed peace agreement presented to the UNSC in February 2019.⁸⁸ This occurred despite apparent snubs, attempts at competing with and undermining the AU's initiative, and superficial coordination agreements followed by a lack of follow-through by the CAR government and international groups.⁸⁹ Aligning under AU-led mediation proved critical in avoiding confusion, forum shopping, and further fracturing of the peace process.⁹⁰ However, the political foundations of the agreement are weak due to the immense AU compromises and indulgences toward the armed groups, vague party commitments, and the CAR's minimal engagement with the public and AU panel throughout the process as a result of its 'emboldened alliance' with Russia.⁹¹ Wagner Group activities in the CAR have continued to include personal security for the President, military training for CAR troops, and direct combat assistance in exchange for unrestricted logging rights and control of the Ndassima gold mine, providing an estimated one billion USD annually, ultimately helping the Kremlin mitigate the damages of Western sanctions as a result of the Ukraine war.⁹² This dynamic demonstrates the immense geopolitical complexities at work. While the AU and PSC possess immense value as regional mediating bodies in times of conflict, both are devalued when it comes to the financial and military might of external actors. When actors such as China and Russia exert their power, the depth of their influence can easily go unchecked and undermine not only the AU's efficacy but also direction within AU Member States.

5. Fragmentation of the AU in Global Governance Due to Chinese and Russian Dominance

While competition for resources and strategic positioning can promote compulsory power dynamics and hard power conflict, the softer approaches of structural power influence can cause those in subordinate relations to adopt positions that support their own domination and their lesser position in that global system.⁹³ Partnerships between more and less powerful states can have broader implications of institutional influence, impacting agenda-setting opportunities and perpetuating privileges and biases that shape choices, voting, and decision-making in international governance forums.⁹⁴ A prime example of this is the ongoing yet unsuccessful attempts to expand the UNSC to include permanent African positions, complete with veto power, as mentioned earlier. There is a call for adequate representation and effective participation of the AU in international affairs,⁹⁵ including requests to amend the UN Charter to allow regional organisations to lead on issues of peace and security in their own regions.⁹⁶

Russia and China effectively utilise their lack of a colonial past in Africa and their support for Pan-African liberation movements to broker relationships and agreements with individual AU Member States, while primarily relying on political statements emphasising the need to align with the AU.⁹⁷ Despite Chinese and Russian influence, there are opportunities for the African Group to wield greater global influence by holding fast to a unified position. There has been some evidence of this already, such as when the African Group's voting bloc helped secure the People's Republic of China's control of China's seat in the UNGA and UNSC.⁹⁸ This has created broader implications over the last few decades among African states, which have increasingly eliminated recognition for Taiwan's government as required by elements within bilateral agreements with Africa,⁹⁹ resulting in Eswatini as the only remaining African nation to refrain as of 2023.¹⁰⁰ Another example follows China's attempts in 2018 and 2019 to reduce funding and non-governmental organisation observers within UN human rights groups and missions, including those occurring in AU Member States.¹⁰¹ Support was divided among AU members, with many positions directly conflicting with the AU's collective human rights norms and objectives.¹⁰² In 2017, AU members helped adopt China's first resolution in the UN Human Rights Council for 'state-led economic development as alternative interpretations of human rights', with all 11 African countries voting 'yes'.¹⁰³

Additionally, the majority of the African Group voted against a measure to hold Chinese policies accountable for alleged human rights violations in 2019-2022 UN debate cycles.¹⁰⁴ This is particularly troubling given the foundational importance of human rights enshrined within the AU's Constitutional Act and other legal frameworks.¹⁰⁵ This geopolitical complexity coupled with human rights violation leniency is also evident with Russia. Considering Russia's position on the UNSC, the UNGA hosts multilateral diplomacy efforts to address the global impacts of the Russian war in Ukraine¹⁰⁶ and exhibits the impact of Russia's growing influence resulting in division among AU Member States: countries positioned against, in favour, and abstaining.¹⁰⁷ Apart from the few countries in favour of the war, over 52% of the remaining African countries chose to abstain or remain absent from the vote on two resolutions condemning Russia's invasion of Ukraine.¹⁰⁸ From the perspective of upholding UN Charter core principles, 58% of African countries either failed to support or lacked commitment to uphold the UN Charter and other UN instruments, undermining the multilateral, rule-based international order informing AU foundational principles.¹⁰⁹ Another resolution to suspend Russia from the UN Human Rights Council exhibited further division within the African Group, with 24 chosen to abstain, 12 were absent, 10 in favour, and 9 voted against.¹¹⁰ To some, the high number of absences and abstentions from the African Group raises concerns regarding Russia's growing influence on the continent.¹¹¹ The voting division among AU Member States demonstrates the challenges introduced in an earlier section regarding the multiple voices that contribute to the AU, resulting in unaligned objectives hindering the ability to speak with a joint position.¹¹²

6. Conclusion

The shift away from Western power dominance in Africa has provided an opportunity for China and Russia to emerge as powerful economic and military actors. By leveraging their 'clean records' as non-colonial powers and wielding their financial and military might, they've positioned themselves to form strategic relations with individual AU Member States. This has driven unprecedented investment across the continent, but has also undermined the AU's ability to uphold its position in the global governance system and widened disparities among its Member States. By recognising the different forms of power dynamics between states, it is possible to better understand the implications of these partnerships on the AU's role in the global governance arena.

While the AU is continuing to take steps to shore up its autonomy, from identifying internal funding mechanisms to advocating for recognition at FOCAC summits, its unity and internal cohesion are still under threat. Russia and China's newfound stronghold on many Member States which have formed alliances based on self-interest and positional advancement often run counter to AU objectives, diminishing its effectiveness, and reducing its capacity to govern for collective good on behalf of its Member States. Most concerning is the increasing threat of the dismantling the AU's foundational values and self-proclaimed greatest asset: exercising a unified voice.

Endnotes

¹ Michael Barnett and Raymond Duvall (eds), *Power in Global Governance* (2004), pp. 6.

² Ibid., pp. 7.

³ Ibid., pp. 8.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 13-22.

⁵ Compulsory refers to direct control by one actor over another; Institutional is the indirect control over others usually in the design, rules, and systems of international institutions to secure a long-term advantage to one and disadvantage to others; Structural encompasses the roles and relationships in societies or international systems, capitalising on the positional advantages and disadvantages of different actors; and productive considers how identities, beliefs, and perspectives are shaped by shared social and cultural forces; *ibid.*

⁶ Anwaar O. Ali, Asmaa S. Morshedy, Adel A. El-Zahhar, Majed M. Alghamdi, and Ahmed M.A. El Naggar, A, 'African continent: Rich land of minerals and energy sources,' 169 *Inorganic Chemistry Communications* (2024), pp. 3.

⁷ Alberta Ama Sagoe and Fergus Kell, 'Africa's Maritime Agency Cannot be Overlooked' (Expert Comment, 3 November 2022) <<https://www.chathamhouse.org/2022/11/africas-maritime-agency-cannot-be-overlooked>> last accessed 18 December 2024.

⁸ Paul Kagame, 'Unleashing Africa's inner strengths: Institutions, policies, and champions' (Report Chapter, 11 January 2018) <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/foresight-2018_chapter-1_web_final.pdf> last accessed 9 June 2025.

⁹ African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights ('Banjul Charter'), CAB/LEG/67/3 rev. 5, 21 I.L.M. 58 27 June 1981, entered into force 21 October 1986.

¹⁰ African Union Commission, 'About the African Union', (Webpage, no date given, periodically updated) <<https://au.int/en/overview>> last accessed 18 December 2024.

¹¹ Thomas Kwasi Tieku, 'An African Perspective on Global Governance' in Triandafyllidou A. (eds.), *Global Governance from Regional Perspectives* (2017), pp. 120; Noting a slight number discrepancy in terms of AU Member States from different sources including the UN. For the purposes of this essay, the Author will follow the African Union's identification of 55 Member States; African Union Commission, 'Member States,' (Webpage, no date given, periodically updated) <https://au.int/en/member_states/countryprofiles2> last accessed 18 December 2024.

¹² Constitutive Act of the African Union, OAU Doc. CAB/LEG/23.15 11 July 2000, entered into force 26 May 2001; The Constitutive Act is considered the 'supreme legal instrument of Africa'; Thomas Kwasi Tieku, 'An African Perspective on Global Governance' in Triandafyllidou A. (eds.), *Global Governance from Regional Perspectives* (2017), pp. 125.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Paul Kagame, 'Report on the Proposed Recommendations for the Institutional Reform of the African Union,' (Report, 29 January 2017) <<https://www.tralac.org/documents/resources/african-union/1139-report-on-the-proposed-recommendations-for-the-institutional-reform-of-the-african-union-kagame-29-january-2017/file.html>> last accessed 9 June 2025, pp. 11.

¹⁶ African Union Commission, 'Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want: Framework Document' (Framework Document, September 2015) <<https://www.nepad.org/publication/agenda-2063-framework-document>> last accessed 9 June 2025, pp. 4.

¹⁷ Paul Kagame, 'Report on the Proposed Recommendations for the Institutional Reform of the African Union,' (Report, 29 January 2017) <<https://www.tralac.org/documents/resources/african-union/1139-report-on-the-proposed-recommendations-for-the-institutional-reform-of-the-african-union-kagame-29-january-2017/file.html>> last accessed 9 June 2025, pp. 24.

¹⁸ African Union Commission, 'Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, Popular Version' (Agenda Document, September 2015) <https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/36204-doc-agenda2063_popular_version_en.pdf> last accessed 9 June 2025, pps. 1-14.

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 2.

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