EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The establishment of the African Union and the creation of the New Economic Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) in 2002 are indicators (among other things) of the will of African countries to bring their continent towards sustainable stability and peace, chiefly through the prevention and extinction of armed conflicts.

Some African regional institutions have already devoted many efforts to the management of armed conflicts, notably through the organization of peace interventions and the creation of conflict prevention and disarmament mechanisms. However, the conditions that would be necessary for the full development of African regional capacities for the management of security problems are not yet entirely met. The difficult social and economic context of Africa is a fertile ground for the proliferation of conflicts. Furthermore, there is the problem - also linked to the economic constraints weighing on Africa - of the limited means and capabilities of African states. Finally, there has been a lack of political will among African countries and in the international community.

This report states that African regional organisations can play a significant role in the promotion of peace and security, particularly in peace interventions, if they can be freed from some political and economic, internal and external, constraints. Mostly, the present report affirms the necessity to envisage the management of African peace and security issues in terms of the complementarities between the United Nations organisation and regional organisations. The main recommendations insist on the shared responsibilities of the international communities and African countries. These recommendations revolve around four main intervention domains that should continue to be or should become Canadian priorities in the objective of favouring the emergence of true African regional capabilities for peace interventions and conflict settlement.

1.   Development of regional capacities for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in Africa

The initiatives of Canada and other countries to develop the capabilities of African organisations can contribute to the creation of useful regional instruments for the prevention and resolution of conflicts. The current African regional institutions should be improved in order to enable them to better contribute to the promotion of peace and security in Africa.

Action

- Target the most advanced institutions and offer them a political and financial support;
- Provide an increased and regular financing to those African IGOs, while insisting on a efficient and transparent management of their resources;