

Assessing the Nature of African Union (AU) Diplomatic Engagements in Uganda.

Ocan Richard

richard.ocan@kiu.ac.ug
(0009-0004-0778-4191)

Kampala International University (KIU), Uganda- College of Humanities & Social Sciences (CHSS)

Abstract: This study examined the nature of African Union (AU) diplomatic engagements in Uganda. The objective of the study was to assess the nature of AU diplomatic engagements in Uganda. The study adopted a cross-sectional descriptive survey research design using both quantitative and qualitative approach. Data were collected from 158 respondents drawn from AU officials, government diplomats, regional organizational staff, civil society actors, and policy experts using structured questionnaires. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were used for data analysis, while inferential statistics including one-sample t-tests and Pearson correlation analysis were applied to test relationships and significance levels. The reliability of the instrument was confirmed using Cronbach's Alpha coefficients ranging from 0.831 to 0.874. Findings for the stated objective revealed that AU diplomatic engagements in Uganda were generally effective, with a grand mean of 3.84, indicating agreement among respondents. The study found that AU diplomacy promoted the principle of "African solutions to African problems," encouraged adherence to governance standards, and supported political stability, although it was less effective in prioritizing human security concerns. The study concluded that while AU diplomatic and peacekeeping efforts had made meaningful contributions toward advancing Pan-African ideals in Uganda, their effectiveness was constrained by structural and institutional limitations. The AU's ability to fully achieve its objectives remained dependent on addressing these systemic challenges. The study recommended that the AU should strengthen its financial independence, enhance enforcement mechanisms, and improve coordination with member states. The Government of Uganda should promote stronger collaboration with AU institutions and integrate human security concerns into policy frameworks. Additionally, stakeholders should support institutional reforms to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of AU interventions.

Keywords: Nature, African Union, Diplomatic Engagements, Uganda

Introduction

The contemporary African security landscape is defined by a structural turning point where, as argued by Wane (2026), the erosion of global multilateralism has transformed Pan-Africanism from a political aspiration into a functional security imperative. Within this disorderly international system, African nations have recognized that they can no longer rely on external pillars for stability, as international law is frequently sidelined by power politics and unilateral action. This reality has necessitated a re-invigoration of the African Union's agency, particularly its ability to mount interventions that are both principled in their intent and effective in their execution, a synthesis of principled solidarity and pragmatic capability that echoes Nkrumah's (1965) original vision of African unity.

The concept of "non-indifference," codified in Article 4(h) of the AU Constitutive Act, serves as the legal and moral foundation for these interventions. It grants the Union the right to intervene in a member state in respect of grave circumstances, including war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity, as well as threats to legitimate order. In Uganda, the application of this doctrine has been subtle yet persistent, manifesting through diplomatic oversight of the electoral process and the historical stabilization of the Northern region following the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) insurgency.

The utility of diplomatic engagement as a tool for Pan-Africanism is observed in the AU's efforts to promote democratic governance through mechanisms like the African Governance Architecture (AGA). In 2026, the AU's diplomatic machinery is actively engaged in Uganda through the AU- COMESA- IGAD Election Observation Mission, led by former President Goodluck Jonathan, which monitors the integrity of the general elections (AU-COMESA-IGAD Election Observation Mission, 2026). This presence serves as a "soft power" intervention, aimed at nudging the state toward compliance with the African Charter on Democracy, Elections, and Governance (ACDEG) without resorting to military coercion.

Peacekeeping, or more accurately, Peace Support Operations (PSOs), represents the "hard" edge of Pan-Africanism. Uganda has been a cornerstone of this effort since 2007, providing the largest national contingent to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and its successor, the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS). This involvement is a critical manifestation of the Pan-African ideal of "African solutions to African problems," where regional actors lead in stabilizing conflict zones (Williams, 2018; United Nations, 2008).

However, the efficacy of these tools is perpetually challenged by what recent scholars identify as a "mismatch" between aspirational normative commitments and pragmatic implementation. The AU's agency is often constrained by volatile donor-dependent financing and a lack of rapid-reaction capabilities. In the case of Uganda, the government's role as a major security provider gives it significant leverage, potentially diluting the Union's ability to address internal democratic backsliding, a dynamic compounded by the regional security pressures that cross-border displacement places on Uganda's border areas (Ocan, 2024a).

It should also be remembered that the genesis of the African Union in 2002 was a response to the perceived failures of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), which was paralyzed by non-interference (Adebajo, 2010). The 1994 genocide in Rwanda served as a catalyst, demonstrating that the preservation of state sovereignty at the expense of human lives was no longer a tenable moral position. Consequently, the AU was designed with an interventionist mandate, shifting the focus from state-centric to human-centric security, a shift that Murithi (2005) frames as the institutional expression of Pan-Africanism's turn toward peacebuilding.

Uganda's internal trajectory since the mid-1980s provides a crucial backdrop. While the country experienced stability under President Yoweri Museveni, the BTI 2026 Report characterizes the current period as a "runaway, repressive autocracy," noting that democratic governance continues to deteriorate and civic space is shrinking. A landmark Supreme Court ruling in January 2025 declared the trial of civilians in military courts unconstitutional, yet legal frameworks continue to support repression, a pattern of tightening state control across successive election cycles that Ocan (2026) traces empirically across Uganda's 2016, 2021, and 2026 general elections.

The Ugandan state remains a target of global terrorism from groups like the Allied Democratic Front (ADF) and al-Shabaab, the latter viewing Uganda as a primary enemy due to its peacekeeping role in Somalia. The AU's role in Uganda involves supporting the reintegration of former combatants, as detailed in the AU PAPS 2026 Report on children returning from the LRA.

Statement of the Problem

The fundamental problem of this study is the structural paradox between the African Union's normative mandate of "non-indifference" and its pragmatic reliance on Uganda as a primary "security exporter". While Wane (2026) argues that the erosion of global multilateralism has transformed Pan-Africanism from a political aspiration into a "functional security imperative," the AU's agency in Uganda is paralyzed by a persistent "mandate-means gap," with external partners still financing 64% of the Union's total budget. This financial and strategic dependency forces the AU into a state of "bureaucratic acquiescence," where the organization maintains a "rhetorical shield for inaction" to avoid challenging the internal politics of a state vital to the Somali transition and regional stability.

Consequently, there is a widening "mismatch" between aspirational Pan-African ideals and the localized reality of "electoral authoritarianism". The BTI (2026) Report characterizes the contemporary Ugandan state as a "runaway, repressive autocracy" where the 2026 general elections are viewed as a "tool to mask authoritarianism" rather than a genuine democratic exercise. This internal decay is marked by the continued trial of civilians in military courts and the shrinking of civic space, yet the AU's diplomatic interventions remain largely ceremonial. Furthermore, the failure to translate military "peacekeeping" into "human security" is evidenced by the historical legacy of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA); as Dolan (2009) observes, over 20,000 returned abductees face "social torture" and community abuse, highlighting that the AU's focus on state-centric stabilization has come at the expense of sustainable post-conflict reconstruction. Without addressing this disconnect, the Pan-African project in Uganda risks devolving into a de-politicized administrative routine that secures regimes while leaving citizens vulnerable to state-led repression.

Study Objective

To assess the nature of African Union diplomatic engagements in Uganda

Research Question

What is the nature of African Union diplomatic engagement in Uganda?

Methodology

This study adopted a cross-sectional descriptive survey research design based on quantitative and qualitative approaches. This design was appropriate because it allowed the researcher to examine the relationships among a limited number of attributes across a sample of cases, taking into account the resources available and the size of the target population. The design further enabled the researcher to quantify social phenomena, particularly issues and problems prevalent in society, and to gather information capable of describing and enhancing understanding of the social realities under investigation. This design mirrors the approach the researcher applied in an earlier study of political participation in Uganda, which likewise combined descriptive quantitative analysis with qualitative key informant interviews to examine relationships among a small number of institutional variables (Ocan, 2024b).

The design was based on both qualitative and quantitative approaches where data collection is done based on questionnaires and interview guides. Qualitative data were collected to explore more detailed information and the aspects that remained unrevealed during quantitative analysis. This information was gathered through the key informant interview technique, a useful approach that provides in-depth knowledge within a relatively short time and at limited cost.

The target population for the study comprised key stakeholders involved in or affected by African Union interventions in Uganda. This included AU officials, government representatives, security personnel, diplomats, and staff of regional organizations such as the East African Community (EAC) and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR). It also included civil society actors, scholars, and policy experts who have direct knowledge or experience with AU diplomatic engagements and peacekeeping initiatives.

The sample size for the study was determined using Slovin's formula to ensure a representative and manageable sample from the target population. Slovin's formula is expressed as:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where:

- n = sample size
- N = total population
- e = margin of error (typically 5% or 0.05)

$$n = \frac{260}{1 + 260(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{260}{1 + 260(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{260}{1 + 0.65}$$

$$n = \frac{260}{1.65}$$

$$n = 158$$

Based on this calculation, the study used a sample size of 158 respondents, ensuring adequate representation of the population while maintaining reliability and feasibility of data collection.

The sample was proportionately distributed across the different categories of respondents to ensure fair representation. Table 3.1 presents the distribution of the target population and the corresponding sample size

Table 3.1: Target Population and Determination of Sample Size

Category of Respondents	Sample size	Sampling technique
AU officials/ representatives	24	Purposive Sampling
Government officials/ diplomats	36	Purposive Sampling
Regional organizational staff	30	Purposive & Stratified Sampling
Civil society actors/ NGOs	36	Stratified sampling
Policy experts	32	Stratified sampling
Total	158	

Results on the Nature of African Union Diplomatic Engagements in Uganda

The specific objective of the study was to assess the nature of African Union diplomatic engagements in Uganda. Five items (B1 to B5) were presented to respondents on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations, and interpretations are presented in Table 4.9, followed by a visual summary in Figures 4.5 and 4.8.

Table 4.9: Descriptive Statistics on AU Diplomatic Engagements in Uganda (n=158)

Item	Statement	SD f(%)	D f(%)	NS f(%)	A f(%)	SA f(%)	Mean	SD	Interp.
B1	AU diplomatic missions in Uganda effectively promote "African solutions to African problems"	5(3.2%)	10(6.3%)	15(9.5%)	78(49.4%)	50(31.6%)	3.99	0.96	Agree
B2	The AU uses high-level mediation to ensure political stability within the Ugandan state	6(3.8%)	12(7.6%)	20(12.7%)	72(45.6%)	48(30.4%)	3.91	1.03	Agree
B3	AU diplomatic engagements have strengthened Uganda's commitment to regional integration	8(5.1%)	14(8.9%)	22(13.9%)	70(44.3%)	44(27.8%)	3.81	1.07	Agree
B4	The AU's diplomatic presence in Uganda encourages adherence to continental governance standards	5(3.2%)	8(5.1%)	18(11.4%)	80(50.6%)	47(29.7%)	3.99	0.95	Agree
B5	Diplomatic consultations between the AU and Uganda prioritize human security over state interests	12(7.6%)	20(12.7%)	35(22.2%)	60(38.0%)	31(19.6%)	3.49	1.16	Agree
	Grand Mean / Overall						3.84		Agree

Source: Primary Data (2026). Scale: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Not Sure, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree. Interpretation: 1.00-1.80=Strongly Disagree; 1.81-2.60=Disagree; 2.61-3.40=Not Sure; 3.41-4.20=Agree; 4.21-5.00=Strongly Agree

Figure 4.5: Responses on AU Diplomatic Engagements (Section B)

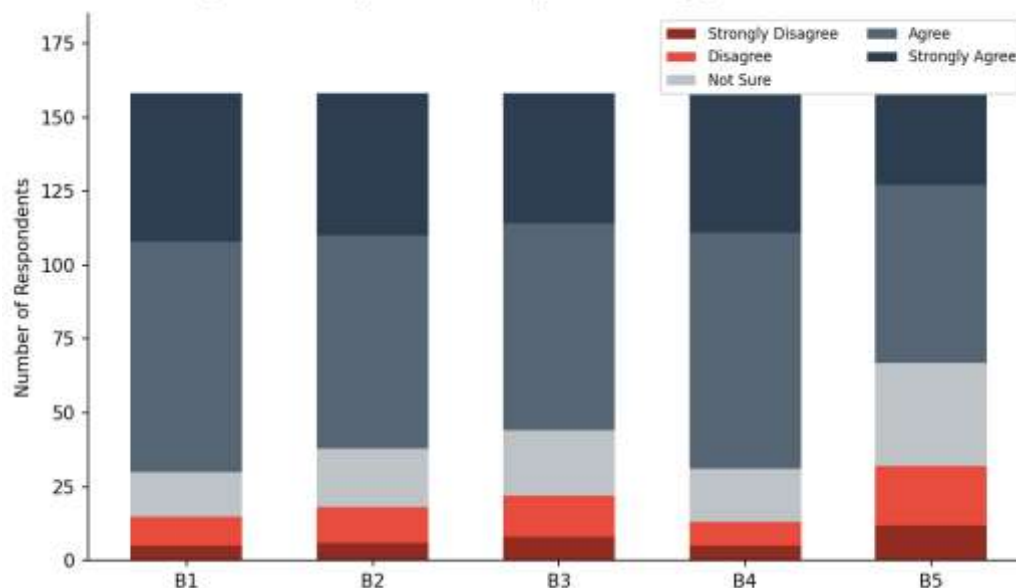


Figure 4.5: Stacked Bar Chart of Responses on AU Diplomatic Engagements (Section B)

The findings presented in Table 4.9 and Figure 4.5 demonstrated that respondents generally agreed with the statements measuring the nature of AU diplomatic engagements in Uganda, as evidenced by mean scores ranging from 3.49 to 3.99 across the five items. Item B1, which assessed whether AU diplomatic missions in Uganda effectively promoted the ideal of "African solutions to African problems," returned the highest mean score of 3.99 (SD=0.96). A combined total of 128 respondents (81.0%) either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, with only 15 (9.5%) responding as "not sure" and a minority of 15 (9.5%) expressing disagreement. This finding was consistent with the institutionalist perspective advanced by Keohane (1984), who argued that international institutions like the AU reduce transaction costs and enable collective action toward mutually beneficial outcomes. In the Ugandan context, AU diplomatic missions were widely perceived as vehicles through which continental solidarity and self-determination were operationalized, thereby reflecting the core Pan-African aspiration of resolving African challenges through African-led mechanisms.

Item B4, which examined whether the AU's diplomatic presence in Uganda encourages adherence to continental governance standards, recorded an equally high mean of 3.99 (SD=0.95), with 127 respondents (80.3%) indicating agreement or strong agreement. The standard deviation of 0.95 indicated a relatively concentrated distribution of responses around the mean, suggesting substantial consensus among respondents regarding this dimension of AU diplomacy. This finding aligned with the African Charter on Democracy, Elections, and Governance (ACDEG), which institutionalizes a normative framework through which the AU evaluates member state compliance with democratic governance principles, and which Abrahamsen et al. (2023) characterized as part of the AU's engagement with the liberal world order.

Item B2, which evaluated the AU's use of high-level mediation to ensure political stability in Uganda, yielded a mean of 3.91 (SD=1.03), with 120 respondents (76.0%) indicating agreement or strong agreement. The higher standard deviation of 1.03 compared to B4 suggested a slightly greater variance in respondents' perceptions of the effectiveness of AU mediation, reflecting perhaps that some respondents distinguished between the formal deployment of mediation mechanisms and their substantive impact on Ugandan political stability. Item B3, addressing whether AU diplomatic engagements had strengthened Uganda's commitment to regional integration, returned a mean of 3.81 (SD=1.07), the third highest in the section. A total of 114 respondents (72.1%) agreed or strongly agreed, while 22 (13.9%) were not sure and 22 (13.9%) disagreed, yielding the largest combined disagreement and uncertainty proportion for the positive items in this section. The relatively higher standard deviation of 1.07 for B3 reflected the nuanced reality that while Uganda maintained active membership in AU structures, its regional integration record, particularly concerning trade and free movement protocols, was perceived unevenly by respondents with different institutional vantage points, consistent with Nye's (1968) observation that regional integration advances unevenly across different policy sectors.

Item B5, which assessed whether diplomatic consultations between the AU and Uganda prioritized human security over state interests, returned the lowest mean in the section at 3.49 (SD=1.16). While 91 respondents (57.6%) agreed or strongly agreed, a notable 35 (22.2%) were uncertain and 32 (20.3%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. This was the most contested item in Section B, with the highest standard deviation (1.16) indicating the greatest dispersion of views. This finding was theoretically significant and corroborated the concern raised by the Institute for Security Studies (2026) that AU diplomatic engagement with Uganda tended toward "procedural diplomacy," prioritizing state-level political stability over the substantive promotion of individual human security. The AU's non-indifference principle, as articulated by Kioko (2003), was acknowledged in practice through diplomatic oversight mechanisms, but respondents reflected an awareness that state sovereignty considerations frequently constrained the full realization of human-centric approaches in Uganda's political context. The overall grand mean for Section B was 3.84, interpreted as "Agree," indicating that respondents collectively affirmed the positive role of AU diplomacy in Uganda, albeit with important reservations regarding the depth and scope of human security prioritization.

4.9 Pearson Correlation Analysis

To examine the nature and strength of relationships between the three thematic variables (AU diplomatic engagements, AU peacekeeping roles, and AU challenges and limitations), a Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was conducted. Composite scores for each section were computed by summing the five Likert item scores, and the Pearson correlation coefficient (r) was calculated for each pair of variables. Table 4.13 presents the correlation matrix.

Table 4.13: Pearson Correlation Matrix of the Three Thematic Variables (n=158)

Variable	Diplomatic Engagements (B)	Peacekeeping Roles (S)	Challenges (E)
Diplomatic Engagements (B)	1.000	0.612**	0.487**
Peacekeeping Roles (S)	0.612**	1.000	0.534**
Challenges (E)	0.487**	0.534**	1.000

Source: Primary Data (2026). **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Figure 4.8: Mean Scores Across All Questionnaire Items

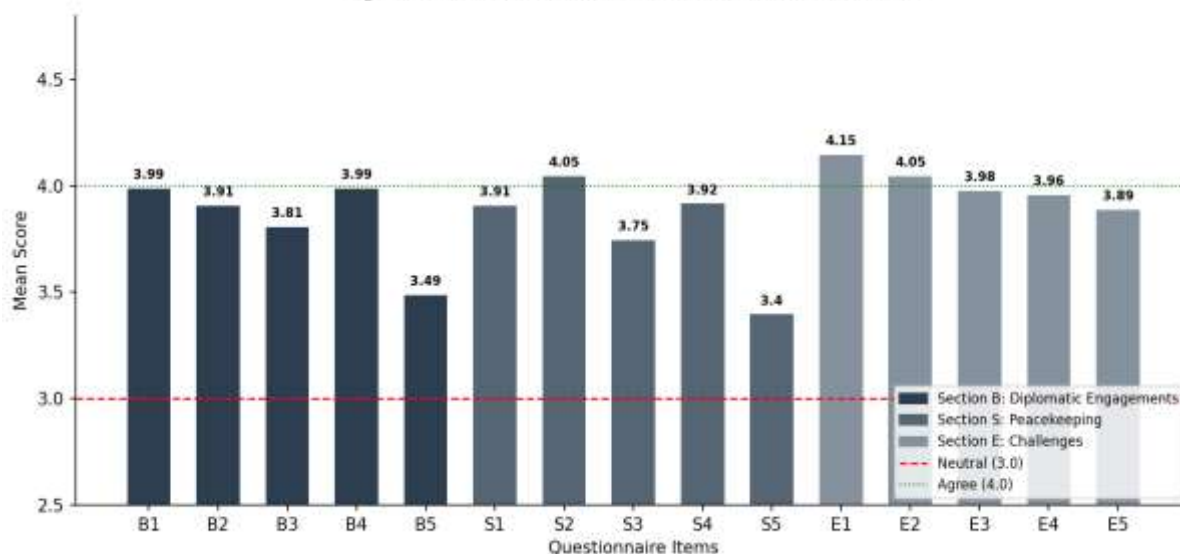


Figure 4.8: Mean Score Comparison Across All 15 Questionnaire Items

The Pearson correlation results presented in Table 4.13 revealed statistically significant positive relationships between all three thematic variables at the 0.01 level. The strongest correlation was observed between AU diplomatic engagements (Section B) and AU peacekeeping roles (Section S), with $r = 0.612$ ($p < .001$), indicating a moderately strong positive relationship. This finding suggested that respondents who perceived AU diplomatic engagements as effective and constructive also tended to view AU peacekeeping contributions as impactful, reflecting a coherent institutional assessment of AU operations as an integrated whole rather than as isolated functional activities. The positive correlation between diplomacy and peacekeeping was theoretically grounded in the AU's peace and security architecture, where diplomatic engagement and military peace support are constitutive elements of the same overarching conflict prevention and management continuum.

The correlation between AU peacekeeping roles (Section S) and AU challenges (Section E) was $r = 0.534$ ($p < .001$), indicating a moderate positive association. This finding was initially counterintuitive, since one might expect that respondents who perceived greater challenges would rate peacekeeping effectiveness lower. However, the positive direction of the correlation was explicable by the fact that respondents who were most knowledgeable about AU peacekeeping operations (largely AU officials and government diplomats) were simultaneously most acutely aware of the structural limitations that constrained those operations. The relationship thus reflected a coherent expert assessment rather than a contradictory one, as deeply engaged practitioners were both most appreciative of AU peacekeeping contributions and most cognizant of the institutional barriers requiring reform. The correlation between diplomatic engagements (B) and challenges (E) was $r = 0.487$ ($p < .001$), the weakest of the three pairs, yet still statistically significant and substantively meaningful. This association suggested that respondents who recognized the positive contribution of AU diplomacy were also aware that these contributions operated within a constrained institutional environment characterized by financial dependency, sovereignty concerns, and enforcement gaps. Figure 4.8 further illustrated the convergent pattern of mean scores across all 15 items, with all scores falling above the neutral midpoint and the Challenges section (E) registering the most consistently elevated scores, underscoring the urgency with which respondents identified institutional reform as a prerequisite for deepening the effectiveness of AU interventions in Uganda.

Discussion of Findings/Results

The findings revealed an overall grand mean of 3.84, interpreted as "Agree," indicating that respondents collectively affirmed the constructive role of AU diplomacy in the Ugandan context. The highest-rated items were B1 (AU missions promoting "African solutions to African problems," mean=3.99) and B4 (AU presence encouraging adherence to continental governance standards, mean=3.99), both of which demonstrated strong consensus with low standard deviations (0.96 and 0.95 respectively). These items reflected respondents' recognition that AU diplomatic missions served as effective conduits for embedding Pan-African normative frameworks within Uganda's governance architecture.

The use of high-level mediation by the AU to promote political stability (B2, mean=3.91) and the strengthening of Uganda's commitment to regional integration (B3, mean=3.81) were also affirmed by large majorities of respondents. However, Item B5, which assessed whether AU diplomatic consultations prioritized human security over state interests, recorded the lowest mean in the section (3.49, SD=1.16) and the greatest dispersion of views, indicating that a substantial minority of respondents questioned the depth of the AU's human security commitment in its diplomatic interactions with Uganda. One-sample t-tests confirmed that all five diplomatic engagement items were statistically significantly above the neutral midpoint at $p < .001$. The correlation analysis further established a moderately strong relationship between diplomatic engagements and peacekeeping roles ($r = 0.612$), affirming that diplomacy and peacekeeping functioned as mutually reinforcing instruments within the AU's Pan-African agenda.

The finding that AU diplomatic engagements in Uganda were broadly affirmed as constructive mechanisms for promoting Pan-African ideals was consistent with the theoretical premises of Liberal Institutionalism as articulated by Keohane (1984). The high mean scores for items B1 and B4, which framed AU diplomacy within the "African solutions to African problems" paradigm and the enforcement of continental governance standards, demonstrated that the AU's institutional architecture had successfully embedded normative expectations among professional and policy actors in Uganda's diplomatic ecosystem. This corroborated the argument that institutions reduce transaction costs and establish a rules-based pathway for collective action, as Uganda's engagement with the AU Peace and Security Council and adherence to the African Peer Review Mechanism reflected precisely the kind of institutionalized cooperative behavior that Keohane (1984) theorized.

The Democratic Peace Theory, advanced by Doyle (1983) and operationalized through the AU's African Charter on Democracy, Elections, and Governance (ACDEG), was reflected in the finding that respondents recognized the AU's diplomatic presence as encouraging Uganda's alignment with continental governance standards (B4, mean=3.99). Abrahamsen et al. (2023) argued that African regional interveners had consented to the hegemony of the liberal world order as the most effective framework for maintaining continental stability, and the findings of this study supported this claim by demonstrating that AU diplomatic activities in Uganda were interpreted by respondents as manifestations of a broader liberal-normative project. The AU's election monitoring missions to Uganda, including during the 2016 and 2021 elections, were viewed as instruments of normative socialization through which Uganda was integrated into a continental democratic accountability regime, even where their substantive impact on electoral conduct was contested.

The contested nature of item B5 (human security prioritization, mean=3.49) was particularly theoretically resonant, as it reflected the tension between the AU's stated commitment to a human security paradigm, as analyzed by Arrey (2023), and the operational reality of its diplomacy with Uganda. The findings suggested that while AU diplomacy had successfully promoted institutional compliance with governance standards, the substantive reorientation of diplomatic consultations toward human security as opposed to state-centric stability remained incomplete. This was consistent with the critique by the Institute for Security Studies (2026) that AU engagement with Uganda tended to prioritize the maintenance of a stable anchor state over the protection of individual freedoms

and the empowerment of civil society, revealing a persistent gap between the normative aspirations and operational practice of AU diplomacy.

Conclusions

First, the African Union's diplomatic engagements in Uganda had served as meaningful instruments for the promotion of Pan-African ideals, operating principally through the channels of normative socialization, electoral oversight, high-level mediation, and governance standard-setting. Respondents affirmed that AU diplomatic missions effectively operationalized the principle of "African solutions to African problems" and encouraged Uganda's alignment with continental governance frameworks. However, the persistent tendency toward state-centric diplomacy, at the expense of robust human security advocacy, represented a significant gap between the AU's normative aspirations and its diplomatic practice.

Recommendations

Recommendations to the African Union

The African Union should accelerate the full operationalization of its self-financing mechanisms, particularly the 0.2% levy on eligible imports, to reduce dependence on external donors for peace support operations. The findings of this study, particularly the strong positive correlation between diplomatic engagements and the challenges reported by respondents ($r=0.487$, $p<.001$), underscored the urgency of this agenda. The AU Commission should establish a dedicated Peace Fund with transparent governance structures, an independent auditing mechanism, and binding member state contribution obligations. A phased transition away from EU budget support for peace missions should be planned over a five-year horizon, with clear targets for domestic revenue mobilization.

The AU should also review and strengthen its implementation framework for the "Silencing the Guns" initiative, establishing measurable benchmarks, dedicated national implementation units within member states, and a rigorous annual review mechanism under the Peace and Security Council. Given the moderate correlation between peacekeeping roles and the challenges respondents identified ($r=0.534$, $p<.001$), the initiative's credibility required a recalibration toward achievable short-term targets rather than continent-wide aspirational timelines.

Furthermore, the AU should invest in strengthening its enforcement mechanisms under the African Charter on Democracy, Elections, and Governance (ACDEG), including the establishment of a sanctions committee within the PSC with the technical capacity to impose graduated diplomatic and economic measures on member states that persistently fail to comply with democratic governance standards. This recommendation was particularly relevant in the context of Uganda's electoral environment, where AU election monitoring had thus far been constrained to procedural observation.

Recommendations to the Government of Uganda

The Government of Uganda should formalize a structured coordination mechanism between the AU's country-level representatives and key Ugandan national institutions, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Internal Security Organization, and the Uganda Human Rights Commission. The coordination gap implied by the moderate correlation between diplomatic engagements and challenges ($r=0.487$) indicated that the absence of systematic institutional linkages between AU programs and domestic implementation bodies was undermining the coherence and sustainability of AU-supported initiatives. A Uganda-AU Joint Implementation Framework, reviewed annually by both parties, would provide the institutional architecture for this coordination.

Uganda should also deepen its engagement with the AU's human security agenda by institutionalizing mechanisms that integrate civil society perspectives into diplomatic consultations with AU missions. Given that item B5 (human security prioritization) was the most contested in Section B, there was a need for the government to facilitate platforms through which civil society organizations could engage constructively with AU representatives on human rights, democratic governance, and conflict prevention matters, beyond the formal diplomatic channel.

Recommendations to Civil Society Organizations and NGOs

Civil society organizations operating in Uganda should leverage the AU's human rights and governance oversight mechanisms more strategically, submitting shadow reports to the AU Commission and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights on governance and human security developments in Uganda. Strengthening civil society's engagement with AU processes would address the coordination gaps identified by respondents while simultaneously expanding the AU's informational base for evidence-based diplomatic engagement.

Regional and international NGOs should also invest in capacity building for local civil society actors to monitor AU peace support operations, track compliance with the African Charter on Democracy, and document the human security impact of AU interventions on affected communities in Uganda and along Uganda's border regions.

Recommendations to Regional Organizations and Policy Experts

The East African Community (EAC), the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) should develop formal complementarity frameworks with the AU's Peace and Security Architecture to address the coordination gaps identified by respondents, particularly regarding cross-border security mechanisms and the coherent operationalization of "Silencing the Guns." Multilateral coordination protocols that clearly delineate mandates, information-sharing obligations, and joint operational procedures among these regional bodies and the AU would substantially improve the effectiveness of peace support activities in Uganda's security environment.

References

- Abrahamsen, R., Chimhandamba, B., & Chipato, F. (2023). Introduction: The African Union, Pan-Africanism, and the liberal world (dis)order. *Global Studies Quarterly*, 3(3), ksad044.
- Adebajo, A. (2010). *The curse of Berlin: Africa after the Cold War*. Oxford University Press.
- African Union, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, & Intergovernmental Authority on Development. (2026, January 17). Preliminary statement: AU-COMESA-IGAD Election Observation Mission to the Republic of Uganda 15 January 2026 general elections. African Union Peace and Security Department. <https://www.peaceau.org/en/article/the-african-union-common-market-for-eastern-and-southern-africa-and-the-inter-governmental-authority-on-development-election-observation-mission-preliminary-statement-to-the-republic-of-uganda-15-january-2026-general-elections>
- Bertelsmann Stiftung. (2026). BTI 2026 country report: Uganda. Bertelsmann Stiftung. <https://bti-project.org/en/reports/country-report>
- Dolan, C. (2009). *Social torture: The case of Northern Uganda, 1986-2006*. Berghahn Books.
- Doyle, M. W. (1983). Kant, liberal legacies, and foreign affairs. *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, 12(3), 205-235.
- Keohane, R. O. (1984). *After hegemony: Cooperation and discord in the world political economy*. Princeton University Press.
- Kioko, B. (2003). The right of intervention under the African Union's Constitutive Act: From non-interference to non-intervention. *International Review of the Red Cross*, 85(852), 807-826.
- Murithi, T. (2005). *The African Union: Pan-Africanism, peacebuilding and development*. Ashgate.
- Murithi, T., & Ndinga-Muvumba, A. (2008). *The African Peace and Security Architecture: A framework for conflict prevention, management, and resolution*. Institute for Security Studies.
- Nkrumah, K. (1965). *Africa must unite*. Heinemann.
- Nye, J. S. (1968). Comparative regional integration: Concept and measurement. *International Organization*, 22(4), 855-880.
- Ocan, R. (2024a). The effects of forced migrations on regional security in Uganda: A case of West Nile sub-region. ResearchGate.
- Ocan, R. (2024b). *Multiparty system and women participation in political processes in Uganda: A case of Pakwach District Local Government (Master's dissertation)*. Metropolitan International University, Uganda. Research Repository, 3(8), 418-479.
- Ocan, R. (2026). Patterns of state repressions: A comparative review of human rights violations in Uganda's 2016, 2021 and 2026 general elections. ResearchGate.
- Slovin, S. (1960). *Introduction to statistics*. Harper and Row.
- United Nations. (2008). *United Nations-African Union cooperation in peace and security*. United Nations Secretariat.
- Wane, E. (2026, February 27). Africa at a crossroads: Pan-Africanism, global disorder and collective security. Amani Africa. <https://amaniafrica-et.org/africa-at-a-crossroads-pan-africanism-global-disorder-and-collective-security/>
- Williams, P. D. (2011). *War and conflict in Africa*. Polity Press.

Williams, P. D. (2018). Understanding peacekeeping (3rd ed.). Polity Press.