

## “It’s about common destiny and shared responsibility”

### Interview with Michelle Ndiaye on African ownership in peace and security

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#### To what extent are African security challenges not only regional but truly global security challenges?

I think there are no African security trends or global security trends anymore, there are interconnected security trends today, given the nature and evolution of for example terrorism. The evolution and the nature of trends today guide us to say they are all global trends and we need to address them to share responsibility. But also we need to have a shared narrative and understanding of what these trends have in common and what brings us together. Because that’s really the big question we face today.

**“There are no African security trends or global security trends anymore.”**

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#### How can African actors increase their leverage vis-à-vis partners and shape international debates?

I think there is a lot of evolution when it comes to Africa having its voice heard particularly when it comes to security and recent security issues because these trends, as I have said, are common and we have a shared responsibility vis-à-vis these trends. I think that Africa has to always speak with one voice. And I think to leverage our standing in the global security landscape today, we need not only to understand these trends better and be prepared at the national level but we need to make sure that maintaining peace is both on the regional and on the global agenda. That is the first

**“Africa has to always speak with one voice.”**

point, at the level of the narrative. The second one is how we adapt the tools that we have to respond to these trends at the regional level and also at the global level. Leveraging our voice and our understanding of these trends means that we are working closely with the international community but also make sure that internally there is enough mobilization, political and financial, that actually would help to respond to

these trends. So it’s not only a one way ticket. It’s about common destiny and shared responsibility.

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#### You are the Head of the Tana Forum Secretariat. What does the Forum contribute to African-led solutions in peace and security?

I think the Tana Forum initially was set up really to bring Africa closer to the decision-making and to let Africans take matters in their own hands. That’s the entire focus of having the Tana Forum. How we create a platform that will bring stakeholders together, including decision-makers from the African continent and outside of the continent to think very candidly and discuss very candidly solutions that are African-owned but with a perspective on the relations between Africa and the rest of the world. And, as I have said, it’s about taking more responsibility, but those responsibilities are not for Africa alone when it comes to dealing with current security trends. So that’s precisely what the Tana Forum was set up, making sure that we understand those trends and to find solutions that are home-grown, but home-grown meaning also that you have to consult with the others to be able to do it together.

**“Responsibilities are not for Africa alone when it comes to dealing with current security trends.”**

#### Michelle Ndiaye

Michelle Ndiaye is the Director of the Africa Peace and Security Programme at the Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS), a joint programme with the African Union Commission (AUC) and the German Cooperation (GIZ), and also Head of the Tana Forum Secretariat.

Before joining IPSS, Ms Ndiaye was the Managing Director of the Mandela Institute for Development Studies and headed several African and international Organizations. She was listed in the New African Magazine as one of the top 100 Most Influential Africans of 2018.



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