

## Special Issue: Covid-19, Peace and Security in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities

### Guest Editors

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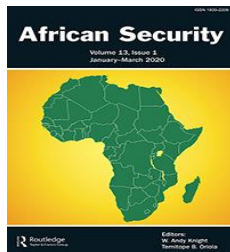
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### Context

In December 2019, the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome, a Coronavirus (SARS-CoV-19 or COVID-19) began to spread from Wuhan, China, a city with a population of 11 million. By December 31, the World Health Organization (WHO) was alerted by the Chinese government that at least 40 individuals (several of whom worked at the Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market) were infected by this virus. COVID-19 quickly spread across Asia, Europe and North America and made its way to Africa in February 2020. On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the illness a global pandemic. Like many countries around the world, African governments quickly responded by declaring state of emergencies, lockdowns, curfews, heavy policing, and social distancing measures to combat the spread. Even though Covid-19 infections and deaths remain relatively low in the continent, it is estimated that 300,000 to 3.3 million Africans could lose their lives because of the pandemic (UNECA, 2020). This projected high mortality will be due mainly to shortfalls in medical personnel and equipment, difficulties in implementing public health measures, and high levels of interaction as people seek to earn a living in the face of increasing uncertainties. About 71 per cent of people in Africa are informally employed (UNECA, 2020), amid growing socio-economic inequalities and rising poverty levels. Furthermore, several commentators predict a particularly devastating impact on the continent's economies which are largely dependent on exporting primary products, minerals and oil to a global market that is currently experiencing a downturn. While governments are concerned about reducing the spread of the novel coronavirus, they are also concerned about potential social and political unrest due to socio-economic hardships. As such, many African governments are reopening their economies prematurely and pulling back on public health measures required to tackle the pandemic.



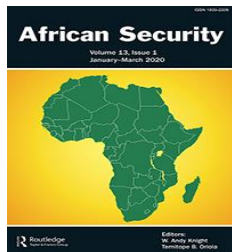
This special issue brings together interdisciplinary perspectives, reflections, and critical essays on the impacts of the new coronavirus on conflict, peace, and security in Africa. Of interest are contributions of the following nature: analyses of the impact of responses to the pandemic on peacebuilding in post-conflict and conflict-affected regions and countries; interrogation of the effectiveness of restrictive and preventive measures introduced by African governments to curb the spread of the pandemic; investigation of the role of mainstream and social media in representing the spread and impacts of Covid-19 on society; examination of how Africa's regional organizations such as the African Union and Regional Economic Communities (RECs), particularly the peace and security architectures, are responding to the pandemic; exploration of the impact of lockdown measures on gender dynamics and gender-based domestic violence; and studies of the effects of the pandemic on informal economies, essential services, and non-essential services sectors. Equally important will be essays exploring the ways that Covid-19 has exposed global inequalities, vulnerabilities, and geopolitics, especially in relationship to Africa and African countries, as well as the African diaspora; articles demonstrating the ways in which responses to the pandemic by African states and people are reshaping the discourse and practices of conflict, peacebuilding, and security; and contributions exploring the social and epidemiological ramifications of Covid-19 for African peace and security. Finally, the issue also welcomes reflections on the local, national, regional, and global perspectives to Covid-19 in Africa and the prospects for African security when confronted with this global health threat.

## Research Themes

The interdisciplinary approach of the African Security Journal allows for myriad papers on the impact of Covid-19 on peace and security in Africa. The themes outlined here are not exhaustive. Contributors are free to examine other questions relevant to broader focus of the Special Issue.

### Themes

- State, Governance, Peacebuilding and Security
- State instability and fragility amidst COVID-19
- Securitization of COVID-19
- Democracy and elections in the time of COVID-19
- Gendered Experiences, Perspectives and Responses to the Covid-19 Pandemic
- Resilience, Displacement, and Migration in a Covid-19 Era
- Impacts of Covid-19 on Conflicts and Politics
- Responses of Africa's Continental and Regional Peace and Security Architectures to Covid-19
- Covid-19, Transnational Crime and Emerging Challenges
- Countering Violent Extremism in an Era of Covid-19
- Comparative perspectives of COVID-19: Local, National and Global Dimensions
- Media Representations of African Agency and Responses to Covid-19
- Social media and mis-representation on COVID-19 treatments
- Covid-19, Culture, Public Health, and Security Nexus: Challenges and Opportunities



The deadline for submission of articles is July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020. Any inquiries about this special issue can be addressed to the guest editors. Submissions should be sent to the guest editors: Cyril Obi and Abigail Kabandula at the following email address: [special.issueAS2021@gmail.com](mailto:special.issueAS2021@gmail.com)

Referencing/style guide: *African Security* has transited to a format-free submission style. Submissions are converted to the house style by our team. *However, contributors to this special issue are encouraged to use the US Chicago Endnote style.*