

Africa-EU partnership on peace and security during 2024-2026: strategic culture in action or a chain reaction to intensified challenges?

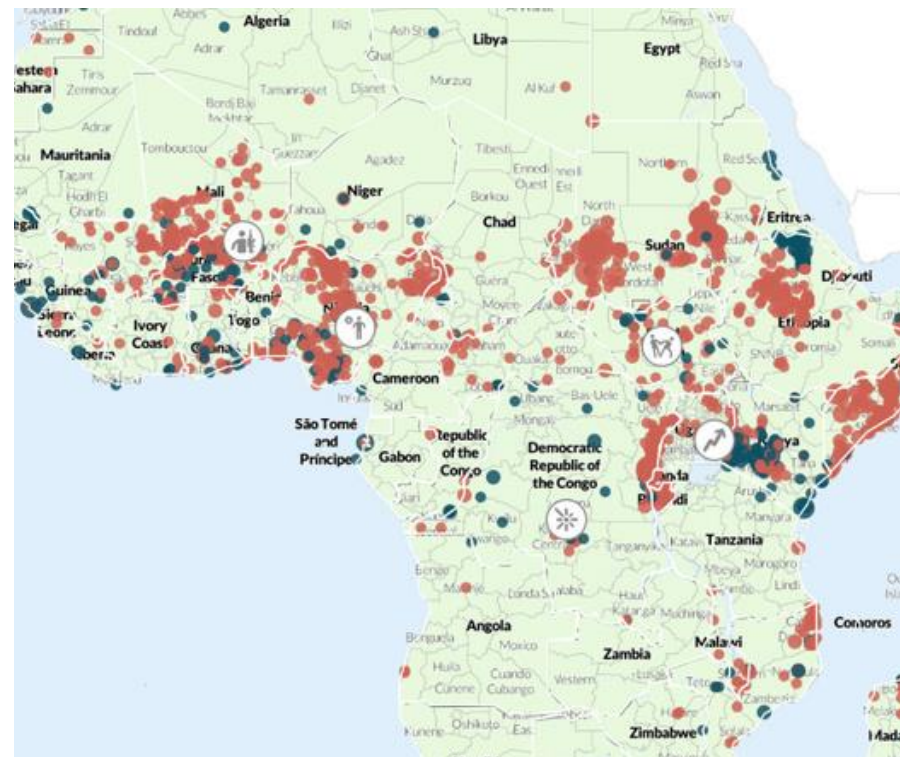
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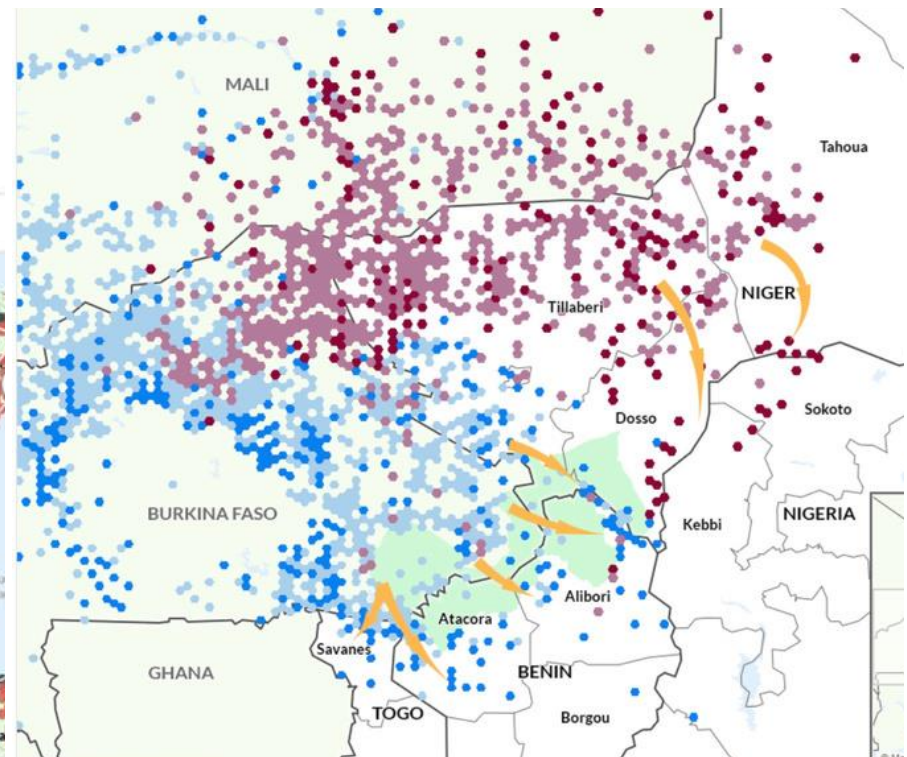
15 May 2026



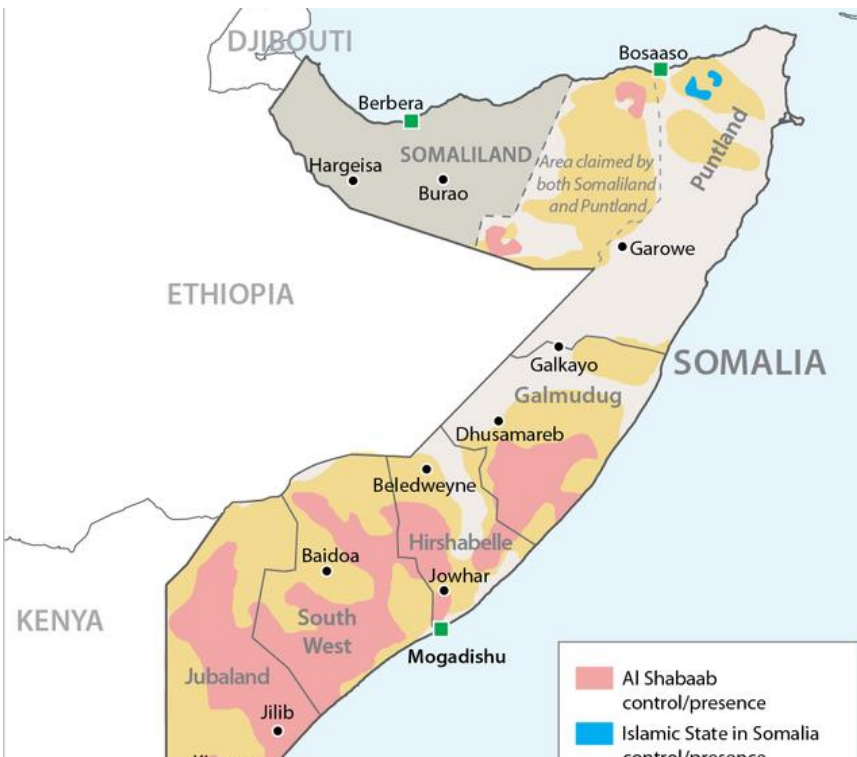
AFRICA'S SECURITY LANDSCAPE 2024-2026



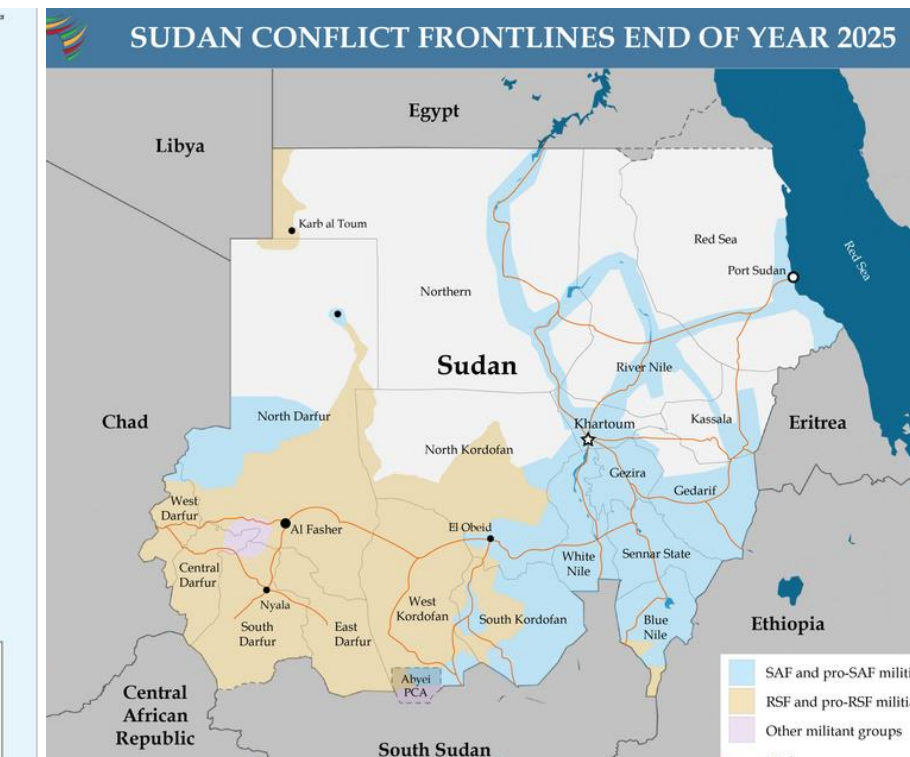
conflicts



terrorism



contestation



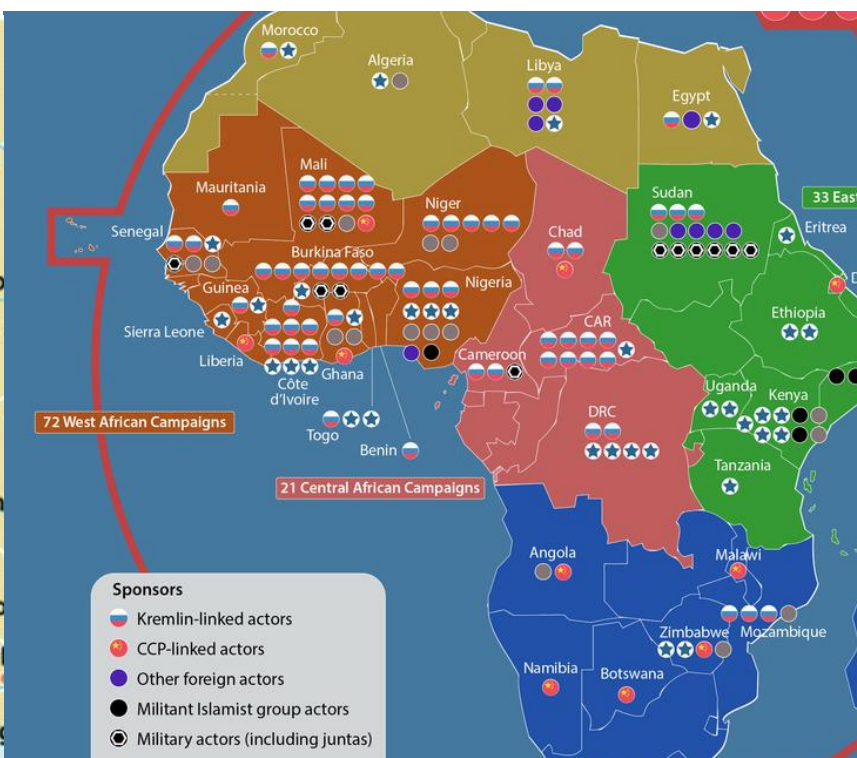
spillover effect



drones warfare



piracy



disinformation



cyber crime

WHO RESPONDED?



AU Peace Fund: \$610M (2024) After Accra meeting (July 2024): Private sector contribution increased from 2% to 36% African-led financing for continental peace and security architecture



EU is awarded the "Most Valued Partner" Award for Peace and Security in Africa, African Union, November 2025

WHY DOES THIS MATTER FOR THE EU?

Reactive Crisis Management

Tactical adjustment
under pressure

2024–2026

?

Which path?

Strategic Culture Maturation

Transformation
of actor identity

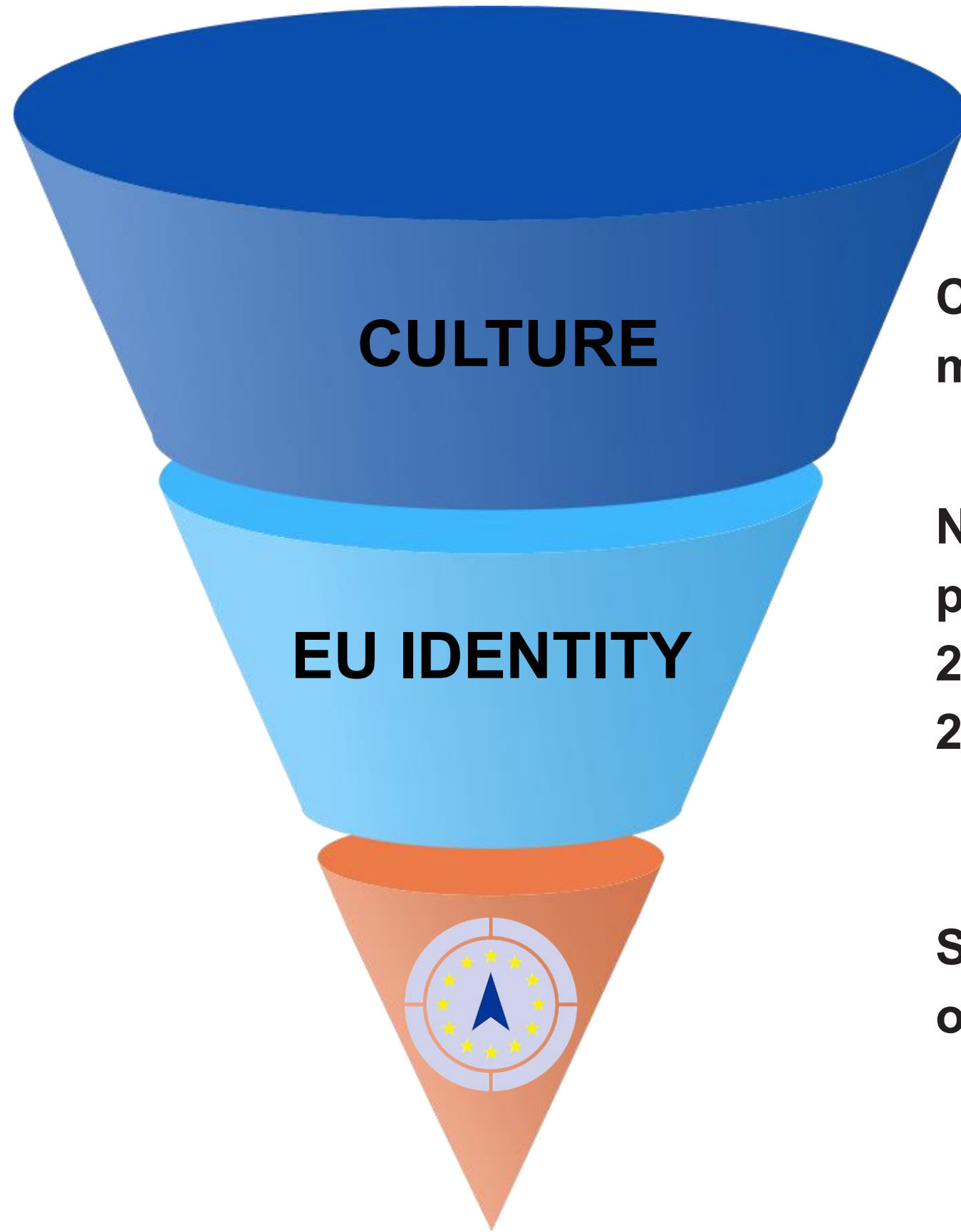
SHIFTING THE ANALYTICAL LENS



Geopolitical competition



Strategic culture



CULTURE → shapes strategic behaviour and actual policy-making (Biava, Drent and Herd 2011; Toje 2005).

Normative power → Humanitarian intervention → Sustainable peace → Integrated approach (Duchenne, 1972; Manners, 2002; Manners, 2006; Meyer, 2006; Biava, 2011; Monteleone 2016)

STRATEGIC COMPASS (EU's strategic document)
operationalisation during 2024-2026

STRATEGIC CULTURE FRAMEWORK

METHODOLOGY: STRATEGIC CULTURE OPERATIONALISATION

Strategic Compass (2022) → Comparative Analysis 2022-2023 vs 2024-2026 on Three Empirical Domains

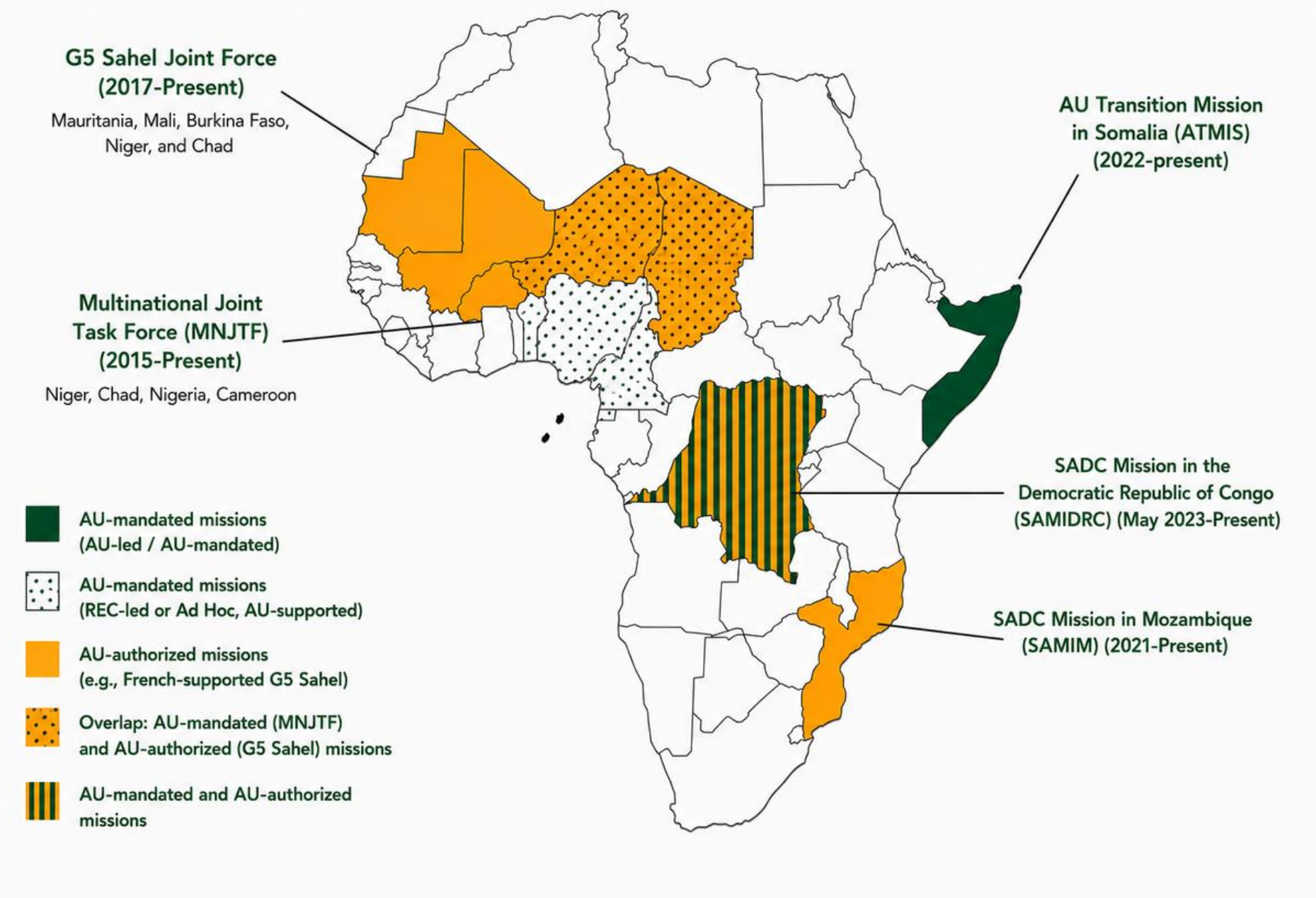


CSDP MISSIONS & OPERATIONS IN AFRICA: 2022-2023 VS 2024-2026

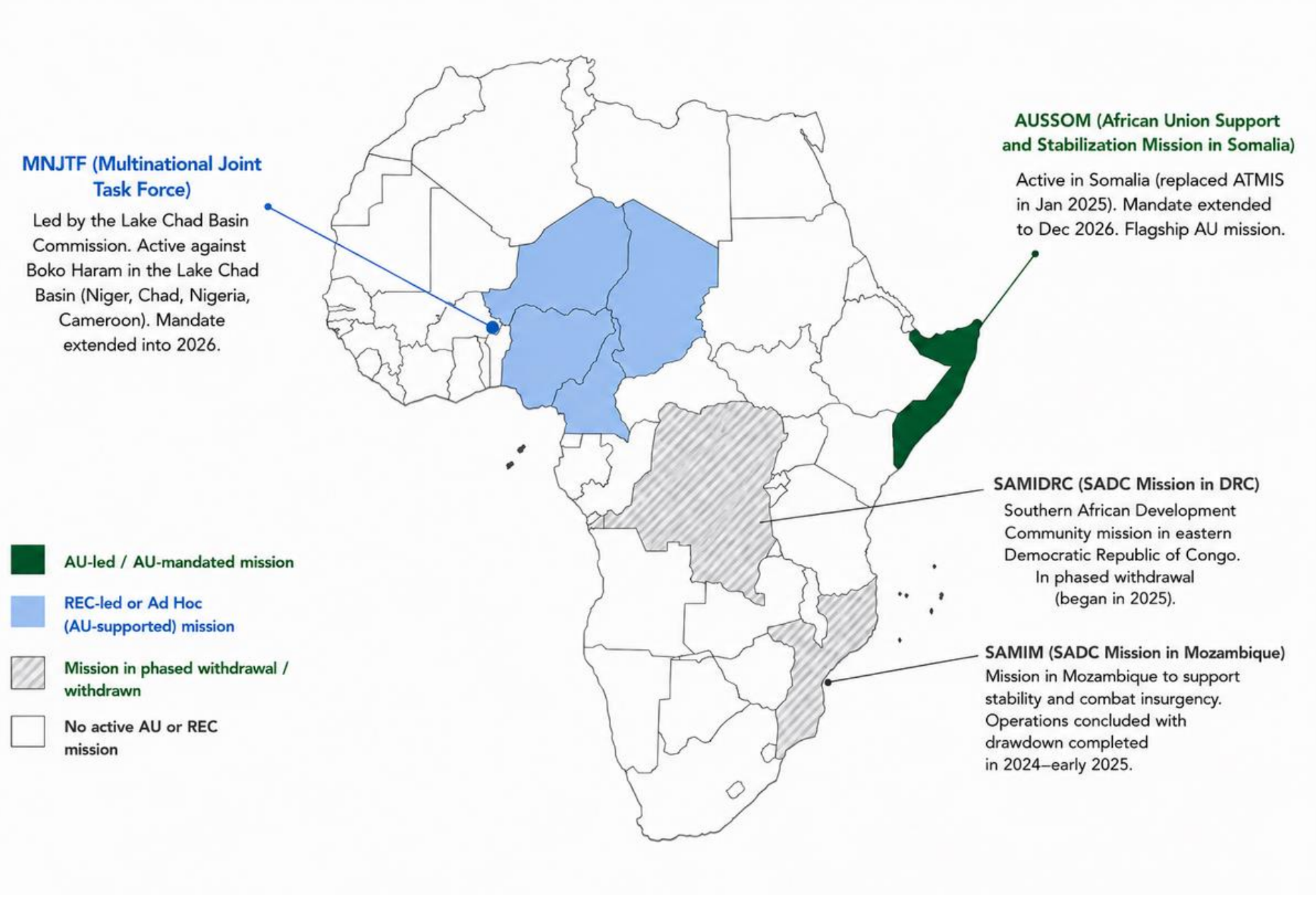
Domain	2022-2023	2024-2026
<p>Hybrid Threats</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • limited explicit focus; • missions and operations underwent mandate extensions without a clear focus on countering hybrid threats. 	<p>Stronger emphasis on hybrid/illicit activities. EUNAVFOR MED IRINI and EU SDI Gulf of Guinea.</p>
<p>Disinformation / Strategic Communication on EU values</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear additions in several mandates EUAM RCA, EUCAP Mali (Jan 2023), EUCAP Niger (Sept 2022): communication strategy for European values (before termination). 	<p>Elements maintained where missions continue. EUAM RCA, EUCAP Mali</p>
<p>Adaptive Pivots / Exits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EUTM RCA: training suspended (Wagner concerns), • EUTM Mozambique: pivot announced to assistance model; • EUMPM Niger & EUCAP Niger: set to exit (announced 2024). • EUTM Mali scaled down. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major exits in Sahel: EUMPM Niger and EUCAP Sahel Niger terminated 30 June 2024; • EUCAP Mali continues (reduced) until 2027; • Key pivot: EUTM Mozambique → EUMAM Mozambique (1 Sept 2024); • Most other missions (ATALANTA, EUBAM Libya, EUTM RCA, Somalia missions) received 2-year extensions (to 2026/2027) with strategic reviews. Shift toward advisory, sustainable, and hybrid models; • Operation ASPIDES.

AFRICA-EU PARTNERSHIP ON PEACE AND SECURITY: 2022-2023 VS 2024-2026

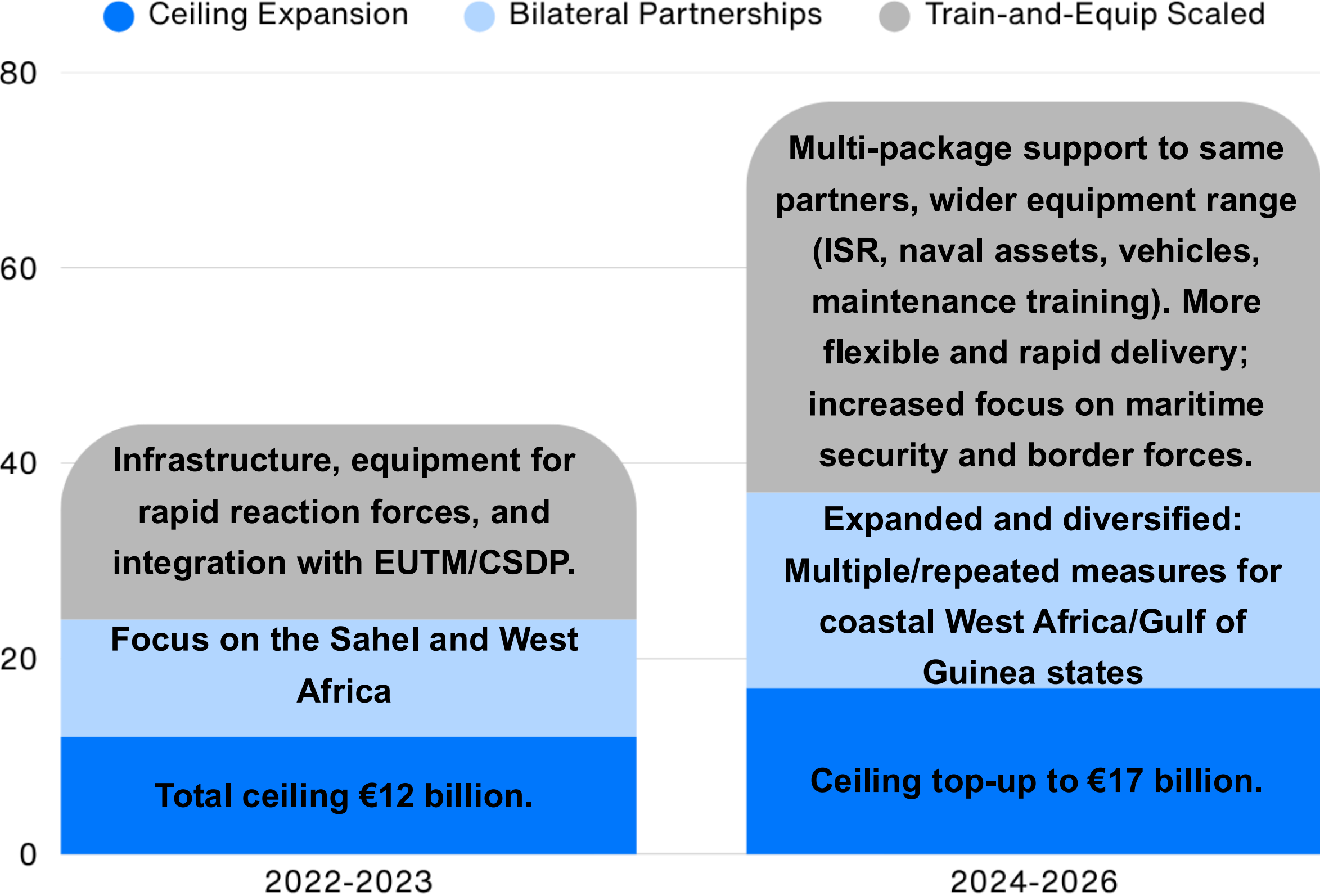
Active AU and RECs PSOs 2022-2023



Active AU and RECs PSOs 2024-2026



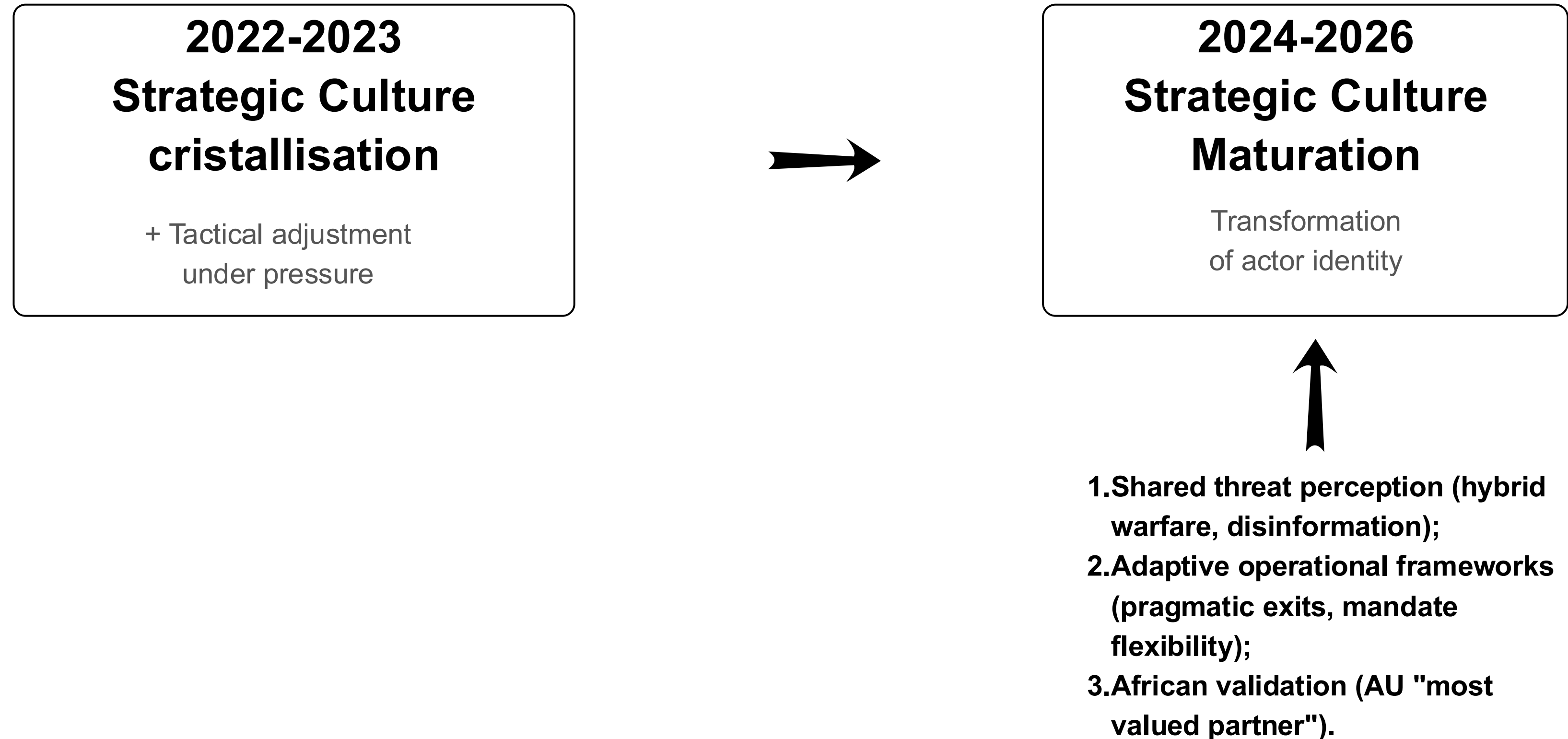
EPF ASSISTANCE MEASURES: FROM COMMITMENT TO OPERATIONALISATION



STRATEGIC COMPASS OPERATIONALISATION WITHIN THE AFRICA-EU PARTNERSHIP ON PEACE AND SECURITY

	Act operational capability	Invest resource commitment	Partner institutional engagement
CSDP Mandates	✓ adaptive mandates	✓ continuity	✓ Operation Aspides
AU Partnerships	✓ expanded support - AUSSOM	✓ scaled funding	✓ bilateral continuity
EPF Measures	✓ scaled train-and-equip	✓ ceiling expansion	✓ new bilaterals

DISCUSSION - WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?



CONTRIBUTIONS

01.

Theoretical

**Strategic culture as
complementary lens to
geopolitical competition**

02.

Empirical

**First longitudinal analysis: EU
strategic culture in Africa 2022-
2026.**

03.

Methodological

**Strategic Compass as
operationalisation framework for
regional/integration studies.**

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

- EU focus;
- strategic culture lens;
- document analysis.



- African agency dynamics;
- comparative strategic cultures (AU/EU)
- field work (operationalisation).

CONCLUSION

1. EU behavior in Africa during 2024-2026 reflects strategic culture maturation, not reactive crisis management.
2. If the EU can operationalise strategic culture during ECOWAS fractures, Sahel coups, and great power competition, the Africa-EU partnership on peace and security becomes a case study for assessing EU global security behavior.



Is EU identity maturation Africa-specific, or does it represent broader transformation?

IMAGE CREDIT

Slide 2:

<https://acleddata.com/update/africa-overview-february-2025>

<https://acleddata.com/report/new-frontlines-jihadist-expansion-reshaping-benin-niger-and-nigeria-borderlands>

<https://africacenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/somalia-contested-areas.pdf>

<https://africacenter.org/in-focus/sudan/>

<https://africacenter.org/spotlight/drone-proliferation-africa-destabilizing/>

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<https://africacenter.org/spotlight/mapping-disinformation-in-africa/>

<https://www.investmentmonitor.ai/features/africa-cyber-crime-threat-digitalisation/>

Slide 3

<https://au.int/en/PeaceFund>

https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/african-union-au/european-union-receives-most-valued-partner-award-governance-peace-and-security-africa_en?s=43

Slide 5

www.vecteezy.com

<https://www.linkedin.com>

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<https://eu.boell.org/en/2020/07/24/eu-africa-close-and-intense-relationship>

THANK YOU.

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