

Amani Africa's UN Security Council briefing points out the need to rectify the inadequate state of AU-UN partnership

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Date | 12 October 2023

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Thank you, Mr. President,

I would like to thank Brazil's Presidency for the invitation extended to me to deliver this briefing on behalf of my organization Amani Africa Media and Research Services.

I would like to recognize with appreciation the previous briefers my dear brother SRSG Parfait Onanga-Anyanga, Head of UN Office to the AU and H.E. Ambassador Fatima K. Mohammed, Permanent Representative of the AU permanent Observer Mission to the UN.

Amani Africa, a pan-African policy research, training and consulting think tank that works on multilateral policy processes of concern and interest for Africa, is the leading source of information and analysis on matters of the African Union (AU) in general and its Peace and Security Council (PSC) in particular, including AU's strategic partnership with United Nations (UN).^{[1](#)}

It is accordingly a particular honour for me to draw on our work for my briefing today.

Mr President,

At this historic moment,² deepening the partnership between the UN and the AU is not a matter of choice nor is it just something nice to do. We believe that this is rather a pre-requisite for delivering on the peace and security and development objectives of the UN Charter.

There is a pressing and growing need both for more crisis management and for enhanced effectiveness of crisis management more today than earlier times. No single actor can meet these pressing demands alone. The continued relevance of the UN and the AU in the maintenance of international peace and security in Africa depends on them pulling their comparative advantages together and systematically coordinating their actions across files and portfolios.

The UN Secretary-General's 'Our Common Agenda' affirms that regional organizations 'fill a critical gap in our global peace and security architecture'. His report on UN-AU partnership highlights that there is no other organization that better reflects these attributes than the AU.

Yet, the state of UN-AU partnership is far from adequate for the AU to effectively fill in this critical gap. As we pointed out in one of our [recent work](#), one manifestation of this inadequacy is the lack of **a systematic and institutionalized global arrangement** for harnessing the full potential and role of the AU as part of the global collective security system anchored on the UN Charter.

Thus, despite the progress registered in UN-AU partnership, the mobilization of responses largely reflects 'ad hoc and a case-by-case basis' approach. They are unable to collaboratively institute 'peace support operations that not

only have stabilization and peace enforcement mandates and capabilities but also are willing and able to act on their peace enforcement mandates,'³ that the security conditions warrant.

Critical to elevating the AU-UN partnership in this context is to establish **a systematic and institutionalized arrangement, affirming the peace and security tools of the AU as part of the toolkit of the global collective security system under the UN Charter**. This echoes the Secretary-General's proposal for this Council to break new ground through 'a new generation of African Union-led, United Nations- supported peace operations on the African continent that blend the respective strength of both organizations in a manner that prioritizes political solutions and maximizes the impact of both uniformed and civilian capabilities.' A corollary to and an essential part of this institutionalized arrangement is the shift that this Council also has to make, as the SG put it, from considering the use of UN assessed contributions for AU -led PSOs 'as exceptional circumstances' to one that must be 'considered in a more systematic manner'.

Mr President,

Today, elevating UN-AU partnership to a higher level is also a strategic imperative for the effective functioning of multilateralism.

The deepening polarization in the world, particularly among major powers, is among the key factors for the increasing fracturing of the multilateral system. The AU, whose member state make up 28 % of the UN has unique reservoir of potential for playing a moderation role in the face of such polarization. Tapping into this moderating role of the AU (and Africa's positionality as [the future of multilateralism](#)) through the UN-AU partnership is key not just for arresting the fracturing of the multilateral system but also for making it fit for purpose. Our [recent work](#) thus emphasizes the need

to bring 'regional multilateral organizations like the AU to the center of the global peace and security diplomacy in a systematic way rather than on an ad hoc basis.'

Finally, Mr President, the AU-UN partnership needs to enhance their focus on the socio-economic and development dimensions of the maintenance of international peace and security. It is now widely accepted that the SDGs and peace and security are deeply intertwined. Achieving the SDGs for member states of the AU is also directly tied to the reform of the multilateral financial system. Africa pays a 500% premium on borrowing from the market and a reform could save Africa as much as \$56 billion, expanding access for much needed resources to meet the SDGs.

On addressing immediate concerns, we wish to draw the attention of this Council to the urgent need to put in place a mechanism for addressing the growing and catastrophic humanitarian crisis occasioned by the raging war in Sudan. The UN's humanitarian chief sounded the alarm with the [extraordinary warning](#) that 'war and hunger could destroy Sudan.' The situation continues to deteriorate with devastating consequences to civilians. We welcome the call that the UNSC and PSC made in the communique of their 17th annual consultative meeting. Yet, pending the emergence of an effective ceasefire and broader peace process, the UN and the AU need to put in place a mechanism dedicated to ameliorating the humanitarian emergency and the plight of civilians along the lines that we outlined in our briefing to the Peace and Security Council on 29 September 2023.

Mr President, your excellencies members of the UN Security Council, I would like to express our appreciation for inviting us to brief you. Indeed, my briefing to you a testament to your willingness to leverage the perspectives of research organizations including those from the continent whose work is dedicated to the issues under your consideration, which I

commend wholeheartedly.

I thank you for your kind attention!

¹ Together with the Republic of Namibia, we are leading a high-level process on 'Africa and the reform of the multilateral system', see <https://amaniafrica-et.org/events/africa-and-the-transformation-of-the-multilateral-system-side-event-at-unga-78/?occurrence=2023-09-26> and <https://amaniafrica-et.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Press-Release-Namibia-and-Amani-Africa.pdf>

² Characterised by multipolarity and low level of trust among global powers, increasingly complex and deadlier conflicts and the growing to prominence of new and emerging threats to peace and security – See Amani Africa, Africa and Peace and Security Diplomacy in a time of the New Agenda for Peace, Policy Brief (June 2023) available on <https://amaniafrica-et.org/africa-and-peace-and-security-diplomacy-in-a-time-of-the-new-agenda-for-peace/>

³ Amani Africa, 'Seizing the New Momentum for UNSC Resolution on UN funding of AU Peace Operations' (May 2023), available on: <https://bit.ly/433Xsp6>