

Authorizing use of UN assessed contributions for AU PSOs is about fulfilling UN Charter's most fundamental pledge, Amani Africa tells the UN Security Council

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Amani Africa Statement delivered to the United Nations Security Council

Thank you, Madame President.

I would like to thank the Swiss Presidency for this invitation to address the Council on my behalf and on behalf of my organization Amani Africa Media and Research Services (Amani Africa).

Amani Africa is a pan-African policy research, training and consulting think-tank that works on multilateral processes on peace and security and democratic and constitutional rule in Africa with a focus on the role of the African Union (AU) and its Peace and Security Council (PSC). ¹ It is an honor for me to draw on and use the rich research work of my organization in addressing you today. ²

Madame President, distinguished members of the Council

We would like to propose that at its core the subject of this

session is not about money. Rather, it is first and foremost about the kind of arrangement that can best deliver on the pledge of the UN Charter of 'saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war' at a time when existing arrangements and tools for delivering on this promise have been found wanting.

At various junctures in its 78 years history, this Security Council had to make bold decisions for adapting the arrangements and tools for the maintenance of international peace and security to the challenges of each era. Although not always successful, there is no doubt that they give the UN the fighting chance for doing better in its efforts towards 'saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war.'

Considering the nature of the peace and security challenges facing Africa, which account for 60 % of the decisions of this Council, it is the moment to make the necessary decision for adapting the arrangement and the tools for the realization of the Charter's most fundamental pledge.

This the Council can achieve by heeding the UN Secretary-General's call in the report presented today for the 'Security Council to signal its clear support for providing African Union peace support operations with access to the United Nations assessed contributions.'

As discussed in some detail in Amani Africa's special research report ³, the question of financing of AU PSOs has been an important part of the policy discourse on international peace and security in Africa for nearly fifteen years. At the turn of the century, the Protocol Establishing the Peace and Security Council was cognizant of the necessity for resort to the use of UN assessed contributions. This was premised on the fundamental recognition that when the AU deploys peace support operations with UNSC Chapter VII authorization, it does so as part of the arrangement deemed necessary and in pursuit of the global public good for the maintenance of international peace

and security.

The experiences witnessed in the use of AU PSOs under this Council's authorization have made it clear that the full potential of this arrangement (AU led UN authorized PSOs) can only be realized if AU PSOs are provided with sustainable, predictable and flexible funding. This Council has on many occasions affirmed the imperative for such funding. ⁴

This Council has actually deployed assessed contributions for funding AU peace support operations, ⁵ although in each instance as an exception. Following Resolution 2320 (2016) and Resolution 2378 (2017) as well as Presidential Statement of 31 August 2022 that requested the preparation of the Secretary-General's Report presented today, I wish to indicate that the Secretary-General is spot on in stating that this is 'an opportune, timely moment for the United Nations Security Council to rise to the challenge of laying the foundation for a new generation of African Union-led, United Nations-supported peace support operations on the African continent.'

On whether the institutional and technical work accomplished is good enough for such action, solid enough progress has been made albeit with some areas requiring further consolidation.

There is significant progress with respect to compliance framework for AUs peace support operations pursuant to UNSC Resolutions 2320 (2016) and 2378 (2017). ⁶

The AU has also established a unit dedicated to compliance. ⁷ This can be strengthened further. The implementation of the compliance standards can also be enhanced with further support.

With respect to burden sharing, institutionally the most critical development is the revitalization of the AU Peace Fund dedicated to mobilizing funds from within the continent

for financing AU's peace and security work. ⁸

Although the question is framed narrowly in monetary terms, there are questions about giving considerations to the enormous price that AU personnel pay with their lives and limbs and the resultant financial, social and other costs that result from such loss to the families, communities and institutions that these personnel are part of.

The use of UN assessed contribution is the avenue for crafting, along the lines outlined in the Secretary-General's report and the AU Consensus Paper, that arrangement and the accompanying combination of tools required for this era to give the UN, working in concert with the AU, the fighting chance to make meaningful effort towards the promise of the Charter to save 'succeeding generations from the scourge of war' in Africa.

The conflict situations in various parts of the continent, including those in which the major UN peacekeeping operations are currently engaged, require the use of the combination of peace enforcement, stabilization and peacebuilding instruments. Lacking the combination of these tools and the doctrinal space for using some of these tools, UN missions in the CAR, DRC and Mali have come to face enormous challenges.

As the progress made in Somalia, under AU's mission there, clearly attests, AU PSOs are willing, and when properly resourced, able to use peace enforcement for creating conditions for peace. In similar conflict situations, AU PSOs financed through UN assessed contribution can be the necessary alternative to UN peacekeeping.

Madame President,

At a time when there is apathy to using UN peacekeeping, using AU PSOs offers this Council the avenue for preventing the emergence of such a dangerous vacuum for security arrangements

that don't operate on the basis of multilateral principles.

The future of multilateralism lies in Africa. The interest of the peoples of the African continent is best served under a multilateral system even when it is imperfect. As Nkrumah said 60 years ago 'although confidence in the United Nations has suffered several shocks since its foundation, ..., it remains the only world organization in which the many problems of the world have a chance of finding reasonable solution.' His endorsement of multilateralism within the framework of the UN is so absolute that he was emphatic that the UN 'must, therefore, be supported by all interested in the preservation of peace and the progress of human civilization.'⁹

Madame President, excellencies members of the Council

The adoption of the framework resolution on the use of UN assessed contributions for AU PSOs will contribute materially to restoring Africa's faith in the multilateral system as forcefully put by Nkrumah and facilitate the harnessing of the enormous reservoir of support for multilateralism in Africa.

Moreover, the use of UN assessed contributions within agreed institutional arrangement jointly worked out by the AU and the UN offers the best framework for AU's role in the maintenance of international peace and security to be one that meets the expectations of the UN Charter. All indications are AU-led PSOs financed by UN assessed contributions are cost effective.

This is not about writing a blank cheque nor is it a matter of charity. Doing this is rather about this Council crafting the framework for shouldering its part of the responsibility in the shared global public good of maintaining peace and security in Africa.

Africa is looking up to this Council. It is our firm believe that this Council will rise to the occasion and muster the will for demonstrating, as the Secretary-General puts it, its

'readiness to address a critical gap in the international peace and security architecture as well as strong reaffirmation of the willingness of this council to stem the scourge of armed conflict on the African continent.'

I thank you for your kind attention!

¹ We are the leading source of information and analysis on matters the Peace and Security Council, including its role in projecting Africa's voice, in concert with the three African members, in this august body. Some examples of Amani Africa's products in this area include: '[Financing Peace and Security in Africa: Breakthrough in Increased African Ownership?](#)' (July 2017); '[The Internal Institutional Setup and Working Processes Shaping the Relationship between the AUPSC and the UNSC](#)' (December 2019); '[Making Africa's Voice Matter in the UN Security Council: Bridging the Gap Between Ambition and Reality in the Role of the African Three Members of the UNSC](#)' (March 2021); and '[Seizing the New Momentum for UNSC Resolution on UN funding of AU Peace Operations](#)' (May 2023).

² I will particularly draw on the report we launched the week before last titled 'Seizing the new momentum for the adoption of UNSC Resolution on UN funding of AU PSOs'. As you can see from the sources cited in this latest special research report, Amani Africa closely followed the policy discussion on this file since the very first special research report it produced on this file in mid 2017.

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>

⁴ Various expert bodies established under the authority of this Council have also on several occasions indicated that one most

viable, if not exclusive, option in this respect is the use of UN assessed contributions. United Nations, "Note to the Secretary General: Follow up to the AU-UN Panel (Prodi Report)", 5 May 2009 and Report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations on uniting our strengths for peace: politics, partnership and people (17 June 2015).

⁵ It did so for the AU Mission in Sudan (AMIS) as part of the plan to facilitate its transition to the joint UN-AU mission. It has done so and still does for the AU mission in Somalia (AMISOM/ATMIS).

⁶ First, in addition to broad normative commitments, the AU adopted specific policy instruments including the AU Policy on Conduct and Discipline for PSOs and the AU Policy on Prevention and Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) for PSOs. Second, through the AU-UN-EU tripartite project, the AU has also developed its strategic framework for compliance and accountability, which was adopted earlier this month at a ministerial meeting, where the AU policy on selection and screening of PSO personnel was also adopted. There has also been deliberate integration of IHL in the various mission documents prepared by the AU Commission including Concepts of Operations (CONOPs), Rules of Engagement (ROE), Force commanders' directives and Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Police/Troop Contributing Countries (P/TCCs). At mission level, the AU developed the Indirect Fire Policy of AMISOM, which has contributed to the reduction of civilian harm, and through the establishment of no fire zones and setting up restrictions on the modalities of use of specific weapons. The Board of Inquiry and the Civilian Casualty Tracking Analysis and Response Cell (CCTARC) are the other tools critical to giving effect to the compliance policy of the AU. There are also instructive experiences of convening marshal courts for holding non-complying personnel accountable.

⁷ At a time when our founding director led an assessment of

AU's experience with compliance through field mission including to AMISOM and MNJTF in 2018, one of the gaps identified was the absence of such a dedicated capacity. See *report submitted by Solomon A. Dersso to AU PSOD on 'Comprehensive Assessment of AU Mandated and Authorized Peace Support Operations (PSOs) Approaches to Compliance with Human Rights, International Humanitarian Law and Conduct and Discipline Standards: Towards a System Wide AU PSOs Compliance Framework'*.

⁸ Three major developments are worth noting in this respect. First, unlike in the past, the scale of assessment of member states serves as a dedicated mechanism to resource the Fund. Second, significant progress has been made towards the operationalization of the Fund through instituting the governance and management structures of the Fund. With the recent appointment of the head of the PF Secretariat, the full operationalization of the Peace Fund is at its final stages. Third, the AU adopted the Consensus Paper on financing of PSOs presenting Africa's position and the progress made in meeting Resolution 2320 (2016) and Resolution 2378 (2017).

⁹ *Africa Must Unite*.