

# Briefing on AU Support to Member States in Transition and Post- Conflict Situations

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Tomorrow (5 August) the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC) is scheduled to convene its 1017th session to receive briefing on AU support to member States in transition and post-conflict situations.

Following the opening remark of the PSC Chairperson for August, Cameroon's Permanent Representative to the AU, Churchill Ewumbue-Monono, the AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS), Bankole Adeoye, is expected to deliver a briefing on AU's experience in supporting countries in transition and post-conflict situations. It is also expected that representatives of the Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (RECs/RMs) will share experiences in AU support to countries in transition and post-conflict situations.

Tomorrow's session presents an opportunity both to take stock of AU's experience in supporting countries in transition and post-conflict situation and to examine the challenges in AU's role in supporting countries in transition and post-conflict situations. The AU has developed a plethora of instruments that guide and facilitate the effort to mobilize action towards supporting countries in transition and post-conflict situations.

The first of these instruments are the Protocol establishing the PSC (PSC Protocol) and the Solemn Declaration on Common African Defence and Security Policy (CADSP). Both outline the tools and mechanisms necessary for supporting countries in

transition and in post-conflict situations. The African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and the African Governance Architecture (AGA) avail to the AU the institutions and structures as well as the tools developed and used over the years in providing support.

In terms of specific instruments, while the full operationalization of the PCRD has been slow, the AU has nonetheless provided support to countries in transition and post-conflict situations. In addition to AU's policy on PCRD, the Five-year Results-based Framework on PCRD; the Guidelines Note for the Implementation of the African Union PCRD Policy; and the Policy Brief on AU's Quick Impact Project implementation are also relevant policy documents adopted with the purpose of translating the PCRD policy into operational frameworks. The AU SSR Policy Framework and its three years Strategy from 2021 to 2023 is another document of relevance to AU's support to states in transition and post-conflict situations.

The support provided within the PCRD framework include supporting the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) and security sector reform (SSR) processes of such countries as well as implementation of peace supporting or quick impact projects. The AU also assists states in undertaking institutional and policy reforms including constitutional reforms.

The other instrument is the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance of 2007 and the electoral assistance unit. Within this framework the AU supports the electoral processes of countries in transition including through capacity building and sharing of experiences for national election bodies and their stakeholders and contributes to efforts for restoration of constitutional order in countries that experienced unconstitutional changes of government.

In supporting states, the AU now additionally has the AU

Transitional Justice policy adopted in 2019. This policy has the central objective of setting standards for holistic and transformational transitional justice in Africa and offering guidelines and practical suggestions for the design, implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation of transitional justice processes in States of concern.

When it comes to implementation, AU has been providing various types of support in different post-conflict countries and countries in transition including Burundi, Comoros, Madagascar, and Sudan. For example, the PSC noted, at its 138th session, on its support to Comoros 'the success of the operation 'Democracy in Comoros', which enabled the government to re-establish its authority in Anjouan' and the holding of elections which made it possible to democratically elect the new president of the Island of Anjouan. As highlighted in the 2020 AU Commission annual report on the activities of the AU and its organs, the AU has provided technical assistance to member States including Mali, Somalia, Madagascar, the Gambia, Guinea Bissau and Central African Republic (CAR) in areas such as DDR and SSR. In addition, AU also continues the implementation of its PCRD efforts through its various missions such as the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and AU Military Observers Mission to Central African Republic (CAR) (MOUACA), AU Support Mission to Mali and Sahel (MISAHL) as well as its liaison offices in countries such as Burundi, CAR, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Cote D'Ivoire, Sudan, Madagascar and Guinea Bissau. The AU Technical Support Team to the Gambia (AUTSTG) has also been active in supporting the reform and post-conflict reconstruction efforts in The Gambia through, among others, revising the defence and security policy of the country and the strategy for reform of security institutions. The AUTSTG model shows the possibility of delivering tangible results (such as supporting the government in the areas of SSR) with limited number of experts and without deploying larger mission or establishing Liaison Offices.

The AU, in partnership with RECs/RMs and partners, assists states through the deployment of peace support operations. The most notable of AU's experience in this respect is its Mission to Somalia (AMISOM), which has provided a wide range of support ranging from protection of the federal institutions to the expansion of the authority of the state and supporting the building and reform of security institutions of Somalia. Among the various best lessons from AU's role in Somalia is the implementation of quick impact or peace strengthening projects, which shows what is possible to achieve with small funds through catering for the immediate needs of the affected community. In terms of supporting South Sudan, the areas that the PSC identified in its 990th session include 'the drafting of the new constitution for the country and providing the required capacity building support to the national election management body and other relevant institutions, with a view to facilitating a successful completion of the transition process.'

The complementarity between the AU and SADC based on their comparative advantages is also one of the lessons that can be drawn from AU's engagement in Lesotho from South Africa. It is to be recalled that AU mobilized financial support to SADC Preventive Measure in Lesotho (SAPMIL), contributing to the capacity of the mission to effectively discharge its mandate in supporting the stabilization and institutional reform and national reconciliation efforts of Lesotho.

In the Central African Region, AU's mediation support to the CAR contributed towards the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation (PAPR-CAR). Though the agreement is facing enormous challenges, strides have been made in operationalizing joint special security units and facilitating the DDR process. In order to bolster the implementation of the PARP-CAR and the stabilization process, the AU has deployed a Military Observers Mission to the CAR (MOUACA).

Despite AU's limited leverage on the conflict actors and their

foreign backers, AU's engagement in Libya through the deployment of range of tools is also a testament to its commitment in finding a durable solution to the crisis in Libya. To concretise the support of the AU, the PSC at its 997th session requested the AU Commission 'to continue supporting the Libyan transitional process and the Libyan parties through the provision of technical assistance, expertise and capacity building in disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR), security sector reform (SSR), ceasefire monitoring mechanism, the electoral process, transitional justice, national reconciliation process, among other required actions.'

In West Africa, it has established a political mission that played key role in supporting the peace process in Mali. In the Lake Chad Basin region, the AU supported the development of the regional stabilization strategy and is contributing towards its implementation. It is interesting to note that the PSC in the communiqué of its 1010th session requested 'the AU Commission to accelerate the development of a standard operating procedure on stabilization as an effective tool using the LCBC model to inform the design and development of similar mechanisms for stabilization operations on the continent'.

Despite the wide range of experiences and the richness of lessons, there remain various challenges in AU's support to countries in transition and post-conflict situation. The first of such challenges is lack of political consensus in countries in transition and post-conflict situations as has been the experience in Somalia, Mali, Libya or South Sudan. The prevalence of political fluidity and absence of nationally owned or led coherent strategy limits effective delivery of support. No support can succeed without effective national ownership and collaboration.

The other issue is coordination and policy coherence between the AU and various actors including RECs/RMs involved in

countries in transition and post-conflict situation. There is also the slow pace of full operationalization of relevant AU instruments such as the PCRDR and lack of effective follow up, supported by strategy and funds, of proposed areas of support for countries in transition such as those identified for South Sudan and Libya in PSC's communiqués.

There is also the issue of resources and limited capacity. In this respect, apart from the support it delivers AU is best positioned in mobilizing and channeling the role and contribution of actors that have the resources and technical capacity for post-conflict reconstruction and development support. Apart from harnessing the mandate of the AU Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) and the Africa Capacity Building Commission, this attests to the significance of building close working relationship and strategy in mobilizing the role of the African Development Bank (AfDB), the United Nations (UN) Peace Building Commission (UNPBC), and UN Development Programme (UNDP) in addition to coordination with respective RECs/RMs of countries emerging from conflict situations. Another initiative which can be important for PCRDR related resource mobilisation and allocation is the African Solidarity Initiative (ASI), whose role can be institutionalized and amplified to mobilize the contribution of individual member states towards implementing the support of the AU for countries in transition and post-conflict.

Another important area Council could focus on is the importance of youth engagement and participation of women in peacebuilding efforts in post-conflict countries and countries in transition. AU support should accordingly leverage and facilitate programmes and initiatives led by women and youth as critical elements in building community infrastructure and base for sustaining and enhancing peace efforts.

The outcome of tomorrow's session is expected to be a communiqué. Council may reflect on the importance of strengthened collaboration among relevant national, regional

and international actors in order to support the transition of States emerging from conflict situations. In line with the request made at its 958th session, Council may follow up on its request to the AU Commission, to develop PCRDR programmes and implementation mechanisms as well as to submit a report to Council, detailing the activities of AU PCRDR and highlighting progress, opportunities, challenges, and lessons obtained from efforts carried out in post-conflict countries. The PSC may reiterate the communiqué of its 463rd session encouraging the AU Commission in line with the ASI and in collaboration with the Member States, the RECs and other relevant African institutions, to intensify its efforts aimed at mobilizing in kind and capacity building support, as well as financial contributions, to support post-conflict reconstruction and development activities in the countries emerging from conflict. The PSC may also encourage the AU Commission to institute processes for harnessing and leveraging the expertise and role of all AU institutions in delivering support. The PSC may also call for close coordination and policy coherence between the AU, RECs/RMs and others engaged in supporting countries in transition and post-conflict. The PSC may also request the AU Commission to put in place a process for identifying the support needs of countries in transition and for systematically mobilising and deploying its support according to the need and context of each.