

Briefing on the deployment of SADC Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM)

Automatic Heading TextDate | 31 January, 2022

Tomorrow (31 January), the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC) will receive a briefing on the deployment of SADC Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM) as one of its agenda items of its 1062nd session.

Following an opening remark of the Chairperson of the PSC for the month and Permanent Representative of Ghana to the AU, Amma Adomaa Twum-Amoah, AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS), Bankole Adeoye, is expected to brief the Council. The representatives of Mozambique and South Africa are also expected to make statements as the concerned state and the chair of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, respectively. Further statement is also expected from the representative of the SADC Secretariat.

Tomorrow's session is going to be the first time that the PSC considers the deployment of SAMIM since its mandate approval on 23 June 2021 and its subsequent deployment in Mozambique on 15 July 2021. However, this is not the first time for the Council to consider similar deployments. A case in point is its consideration of the deployment of the SADC Preventive Mission in the Kingdom of Lesotho (SAPMIL) during its 748th session, convened on 24 January 2018.

It is to be recalled that the extraordinary summit of SADC decided to deploy SAMIM as a regional response to the rising threat of terrorism and violent extremism in Cabo Delgado of Mozambique within the framework of the African Standby Force. The mandate was approved for the initial period of three

months to support Mozambique to combat terrorism and acts of violent extremism in Cabo Delgado, by neutralizing terrorist threat and restoring security in order to create a secure environment; strengthening and maintaining peace and security, restoring law and order in affected areas of Cabo Delgado Province; providing air and maritime support as well as logistics and training to the Mozambique armed defence force (FADM) to enhance its operational capability; and supporting the Republic of Mozambique, in collaboration with humanitarian agencies, to continue providing humanitarian relief to population affected by terrorist activities, including internally displaced persons (IDPs). Since then, SAMIM's mandate has been extended two times on 5 October 2021 (for additional three months) and 12 January 2022, without changing its mandate nor personnel composition.

The 10 November 2021 update released by SADC on SAMIM deployment indicates that the mission comprises troops deployment from eight Personnel Contributing Countries from SADC namely, Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Malawi, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe, working in collaboration with the FADM and 'other troops deployed to Cabo Delgado'. But, neither this SADC update nor its communiques that approved or extended SAMIM's mandate disclose troop size of the mission.

Since its deployment in July last year, SAMIM has recorded achievements in the fight against terrorists in Cabo Delgado, including the neutralization of terrorists, recapture of villages, dislodging terrorists from their bases and seizing weapons and equipment. This has contributed to create a relatively secure environment that facilitated the return of IDPs to their homes as well as safer passage of humanitarian support. Nonetheless, as noted by the latest annual consultative meeting between PSC and UN Security Council, the provision of 'technical, financial and material support by the international community' remains critical for the mission to

discharge its mandate effectively. Currently, SADC uses its own resource to sustain the deployment. This effort of the regional bloc in using its own resource was praised as 'a unique precedent on the African continent' at its most recent extraordinary summit convened on 12 January this year.

While SADC's reliance on self-funding is commendable, it raises an important question of sustainability. There is considerable gap between the total budget of the mission (USD35 million) and the amount of money raised by SADC, standing at less than USD13 million. The budget deficit is expected to further widen with the latest mandate extension and the allocation of extra USD 29.5 million, according to media sources. This is in addition to logistical challenges the mission is currently facing. In this context, the main focus of tomorrow's session is therefore likely to be on the financial, technical and logistical support that can be provided by the AU and other partners, notably the EU, to enhance the institutional capacity of SAMIM.

SADC and the AU have already started discussion to explore options for funding and logistical support. Three options are currently under consideration in this regard. The first is to use the African Peace Facility (APF)'s Early Response Mechanism (ERM), an EU initiative worth of Euro 55 million that provides AU and RECs/RMs with an immediately available funds for initiatives aimed at preventing and managing violent conflicts or use of windows of opportunity for peacebuilding in Africa. Accessing the ERM however requires both AU and SADC to come up with proposals that fall within the scope of the mechanism (It is worth noting that the purchase of lethal military equipment such as ammunition and arms are not permitted under the ERM). A positive development in this regard is the ongoing consultation between AU, SADC and EU for the allocation of Euro 3 million under the ERM in support of SAMIM mandate.

The second option is the new European Peace Facility (EPF),

which has replaced the APF since 2021. This option seems more fitting for SAMIM to fill its budget gap due to the military nature of the mission and as the new financial tool notably allows the purchase of lethal military equipment to African countries or sub-regional military initiatives, with or without AU's involvement.

The third option is the use of the Continental Logistics Base (CLB) in Douala, Cameroon, particularly in relation to the logistical requirements of SAMIM. Inaugurated four years ago, the CLB has been providing equipment to member states (e.g. Niger, Burkina Faso, and South Sudan) and AU missions such as the AU Military Observers Mission in Central African Republic (MOUACA). As highlighted in the concept note, positive steps have been already taken by the AU Commission and its SADC counterpart in identifying equipment suitable to SAMIM and discussion is underway to 'facilitate the modalities for the donation and shipment of the confirmed/agreed equipment'.

The issue of enhancing coordination and collaboration between AU and SADC on SAMIM, particularly in the areas of information sharing and updates about the mission, is another area of interest to the Council. The PSC, at its 870th session as well as the second annual consultative meeting between the PSC and RECs/RMs, stressed on the imperative of 'enhanced collaboration and information sharing between the AU and RECs/RMs' throughout the conflict cycles. The first consultative particularly highlighted that the 'African Standby Force should be deployed/employed within a partnership between the PSC and the RECs/RMs policy organs' while recognizing the latter as the 'first responders' to the crisis/conflict situations arising within their jurisdictions. The consultative meeting further underscored the importance of 'prior consultations and coordination' during the 'planning and deployment phases of peace support operations.' Given the importance of joint mobilization of all required resources at the RECs/RMs and AU levels since no one entity can by itself

alone overcome threats to regional peace and security, such prior consultation and coordination are critical for timely identification and deployment of the required resources. SADC and AU did not have such prior consultations and coordination. AU's engagement on the deployment of SAMIM was also missing at the level also of the PSC as the principal policy-making body. The convening of this session for the first time on SAMIM underscores the imperative of consultation and coordination both at the policy and technical levels from the planning to the deployment and conduct of peace operations like SAMIM.

This session should also enable the PSC to discuss the situation in Cabo Delgado including the humanitarian crisis that the rise and expansion of terrorist attacks precipitated and the conditions that led to and the drivers of the emergence of terrorism in this part of Mozambique.

The expected outcome of tomorrow's session is a communique. Among others, the Council is expected to welcome the communiques of SADC of 23rd June 2021, 5 October 2021 and 12 January 2022 that approved and extended the mandate of SAMIM, respectively. The Council may commend the efforts and achievements so far by the mission in the fight against terrorist groups in Cabo Delgado. It may further recognize the financial and logistical challenges facing the mission, and in this regard, the council may appeal to AU member states, EU, and other international partners to extend their support. On the provision of logistic support, the Council may authorize the Commission to provide the agreed equipment stored at the CLB. Regarding the issue of coordination and exchange of information, the Council may request both the AU Commission and its SADC counterpart to enhance their engagement. In this respect, as highlighted in the concept note, the Council may particularly request SADC to 'provide regular updates on progress in the implementation of SAMIM's mandates'. PSC may also reiterate the joint communique of the 15th annual joint consultative meeting between PSC and UN Security Council in

stressing the need for 'supporting stabilization, reconstruction, and recovery efforts in affected province' as well as sustained humanitarian assistance.