

# Consideration of the Special Report of the AUC Chairperson and the UN Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and a follow-on presence

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Tomorrow (30 November) the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) is scheduled to consider the Special Report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC) and the Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN) on the African Union United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and a follow-on presence. The session is expected to take place through VTC.

Commissioner for Peace and Security, Smail Chergui, is expected to deliver a statement. The Joint Special Representative and Head of UNAMID, Kingsley Mamabolo, is also scheduled to make a presentation. Representative of Sudan as the Chair of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and country concerned, IGAD secretariat, UN Office to the AU (UNOAU) are also expected to make statements.

In the last session on UNAMID held in May 2020, the PSC in its 927th communiqué reiterated Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok's request to the UNSC in deploying a mission with a Chapter VI of the UN Charter mandate. It further underlined the importance of respecting national ownership of the transition process and need for continued coordination and

complementarity between the AU and UN in peacebuilding activities. Moreover, the PSC further stated that UNAMID's mandate should be extended up to 31 December 2020 in line with its protection mandate and implementation of the exit strategy.

On 3 June 2020, the UNSC has adopted two resolutions: 2525 (2020) and 2524 (2020). Resolution 2524 (2020) established the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS) for an initial period of 12 months. The UNSC requested the Secretary General to rapidly appoint a Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for Sudan and Head of Mission of UNITAMS and ' to swiftly initiate the planning for and establishment of UNITAMS, with a view to reaching full operational capacity as soon as possible and in order to ensure the mission is able to start delivering against all its strategic objectives no later than 1 January 2021.'

Pending the establishment of UNITAMS, resolution 2025 (2020) extended the mandate of UNAMID until 31 December 2020 with the current troop and police ceiling. The resolution also requested the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the AUC to provide the Security Council with a Special Report no later than 31 October 2020, assessing 'the situation on the ground... the capacity of the Government of Sudan... to protect civilians... and recommendations on the appropriate course of action regarding the drawdown of UNAMID, taking into account the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.' The UNSC is expected to deliberate on the drawdown and exist of UNAMID based on the guidance provided in the report.

In line with this resolution, the joint AUC Chair and UNSG report is expected to provide an analysis of the security situation in Darfur, outcome of the Juba peace agreement, ongoing efforts for protection of civilians and key recommendations for the transition from UNAMID to UNITAMS.

Moreover, in light of the joint October 2020 visit to Sudan by Commissioner Smail Chergui and Jean-Pierre Lacroix, it would be of interest for PSC members to be briefed about the political and security situation in Darfur. In this respect, it is worth noting that despite very encouraging political developments in Sudan, the situation in Darfur remains concerning. Apart from the presence of armed opposition groups, the sources of insecurity include notably inter-communal clashes, land related clashes and attacks on civilians which have increased from the third quarter of 2020. Between June and October 2020, UNAMID recorded a total of 146 fatalities including 111 fatalities in July alone as a result of 31 clashes and disputes, marking a more than four-fold increase of casualties compared to the same period in 2019 and a more than eight-fold increase from that of in 2018.

With regards to the ongoing security risks, another key issue that is expected to be discussed in tomorrow's briefing is the National Plan for Protection of Civilians that was officially submitted to the UNSC and its implementation. The Juba peace agreement itself has created a framework to address the protection of civilians through comprehensive measures covering security, justice and reconciliation, protection of refugees and internally displaced persons.

In terms of the peace process, tomorrow's session will discuss the developments that followed the Juba peace agreement signed between the Transitional Government of Sudan, the Sudan Revolutionary Front coalition of armed opposition groups, and the Sudan Liberation Front led by Minni Minawi on 3 October 2020 and the Declaration of Principles signed between Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok and the SPLM-N faction led by Abdelaziz al-Hilu on 3 September 2020.

The briefing, in line with the recommendations of the report, will also present the action points leading to UNAMID's drawdown and UNITAMS's deployment. The transition will be marked by the shift from the physical protection provided by

UNAMID to UNITAMS's role in supporting the implementation of the National Plan for Protection of Civilians, peacebuilding activities, economic recovery and development. Moreover, the key recommendations outlined in the report include the termination of UNAMID's mandate by 31 December 2020 and the full operationalization of the UNITAMS as per the Security Council resolution 2524 (2020); UN, the AU and IGAD in close collaboration with the government of Sudan to provide support in sustaining peace in Darfur and the need to conduct a lessons learnt exercise to document UNAMID's experience.

Commissioner Chergui's briefing may further provide overview on the outcome of the Tripartite (AU – UN – Government of Sudan) Coordination Mechanism (TCM) on UNAMID that was held in October 2020. His briefing may also touch on the possible follow up technical meeting between the National Committee and UNAMID that is expected to deliberate and rollout actions in the period after December 31.

The expected outcome is a communiqué. The PSC is expected to endorse the recommendations of the report including the termination of UNAMID's mandate in December 2020 and the subsequent deployment of UNITAMS. It may welcome the signing of the Juba agreement and express its wish for the effective implementation of the agreement to ensure peace and stability in Darfur and more broadly in Sudan. It may also commend the Government of Sudan for the development of a National Plan for Protection of Civilians. It may express concern over the recent rise in violence and insecurity in Darfur and may urge for a smooth transition that pays particular attention to the protection of civilians and to prevent any security vacuum in the area. It may stress the importance of continued and strengthened engagement of the AU in the aftermath of UNAMID and more particularly for the AU to play an active role in the peacebuilding and development process of the country. In this respect, the PSC may request that the presence of the AU in Sudan is strengthened for supporting both the transitional

process and the implementation of peace agreements and post-conflict reconstruction and development measures.