

Discussion on United Nations Security Council Resolution 2719 (2023)

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Tomorrow (24 July), the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC) will convene a retreat to discuss the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 2719 (2023) on the financing of AU-led Peace Support Operations (PSOs).

Following an opening remark by Miguel César Domingos Bembe, Permanent Representative of Angola to the AU and Chairperson of the PSC for the month of July 2024, Bankole Adeoye, AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS), is expected to make a presentation based on a report prepared by the AU Commission.

The PSC last considered the [UNSC Resolution 2719](#) on 14 June 2024, during its 1215th session. This session addressed challenges that may hinder the effective implementation of the resolution and highlighted ambiguities within it. Although the meeting concluded without adopting any outcome document, it was decided that the PSC convenes a retreat on the subject at the end of July 2024. This retreat is being convened against this backdrop.

Besides planning for a retreat, at the 1215th session, the PSC also requested the AU Commission to prepare a document that includes the matrix for Resolution 2719, which outlines the sharing of responsibilities, a position paper on its implementation, guidelines for its operationalisation and recommendations. Therefore, tomorrow's retreat is anticipated to be grounded on the document that will be presented by the

AU Commission.

Using the document as a basis the discussions of the retreat are expected to explore and propose recommendations on the ambiguous areas of the resolution concerning the decision-making process, the notion of 'case-by-case,' 'AU-led and under direct and effective AU command and control,' the '75:25' formula, and the extent of application of the UN Financial Rules and Regulations to AU PSOs as well as mission support.

Additionally, paragraph 2 of Resolution 2719 stipulates that AU-led PSOs, granted access to UN-assessed contributions by the UNSC, will remain under 'the direct and effective command and control of the AU'. Considering the fragmentation in the use of deployment of 'peace operations' on the continent taking the form of regional operations, ad hoc operations, a coalition of the willing and bilateral deployments, this formulation aims at bringing deployment under the umbrella of AU's multilateral and established normative frameworks that ensure coherence and compliance. The implication of the requirement of 'direct and effective command and control' requires more than a deployment on the basis of consultation with the PSC and under the AU peace operations policy frameworks. The implication of this is that such operations by arrangements other than the AU including peace support operations by Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs) will not have direct access to UN-assessed contributions within the framework of 2719.

This however does not necessarily imply there cannot be a situation in which operations initiated by RECs/RMs will not at all fall under Resolution 2719. In terms of precedent, there is no single case of a regional operation or ad hoc operation in which the AU exercised 'direct command and control.' The only example that can provide instructive lessons on this question of direct command and control is the hybrid UN and AU experience of mission in Sudan – the UN-AU

Mission in Darfur (UNAMID). While UNAMID was a joint mission of the UN and the AU, the UN exercised direct command and control in coordination with the AU. UNAMID could be the model that can help develop an arrangement between the AU and RECs/RMs for meeting the requirements of operational paragraph 2 of Resolution 2719 that the AU-led peace support operation that can benefit from this resolution needs to be under 'the direct and effective command and control of the AU.'

Concurrently, Paragraph 2 requires that the use of assessed contributions has to be '*consistent with Article 17 of the Charter as well as the financial regulations and rules of the United Nations.*' Similarly, Paragraph 4 of the resolution mandates that these AU-led PSOs must adhere to the UN Financial Regulations and Rules. The UN Financial Regulations and Rules grant the UN Secretary-General authority over peacekeeping budgets, including setting objectives, outputs, activities, and resource allocations for budgets submitted to the General Assembly. This framework raises issues for AU PSO budgets in that it may necessitate adjustments in both budget preparations and reporting on the use of appropriated budget in order to ensure alignment between the demands of ensuring supplies that meet the tempo of AU-led PSOs on the one hand and the UN financial regulations and the decision-making processes of the 5th Committee of the UN General Assembly on the other hand. The UN Secretary-General also holds the authority to commit funds and make payments based on General Assembly appropriations, delegating this authority to mission heads in UN operations. However, this delegation system cannot extend the administration of UN Financial Regulations and Rules outside the UN.

There are however experiences to draw from. As pointed out in Amani Africa's [special research report](#) on the financing of AU PSOs through UN-assessed contributions, the UN, under Resolutions 1863 (2009) and 2010 (2011), established a support package for supporting the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM)

using UN assessed contributions. This is also one of the two models (the other being the hybrid model of UNAMID) for channelling the funds that were proposed in the UN Secretary-General's May 2023 report to the UNSC. As observed in our Special Research Report, '[e]xplaining the reason for the choice of the two models, the Secretary-General's report states that 'both approaches would facilitate the application of United Nations Rules and Regulations, standards for financial oversight, accountability mechanisms and requirements for human rights due diligence and can be implemented under existing policies and procedures.' It is worth noting that the [AU Consensus Paper](#) on Financing of AU PSOs adopted by the AU Assembly in February 2023 also provides the support package model as 'the best starting points for discussing financing options.'

With regards to the financial burden-sharing aspect of the resolution, which directs for the use of up to 75% of UN-assessed contributions for eligible AU-led Peace Support Operations, two issues may arise. Various AU member states made it clear that the AU is not in a position to contribute the 25%. In keeping with not leaving the AU with the full burden of contributing the balance of the budget not covered by UN Assessed contributions, one is the aspect of the resolution, which states that the remaining 25% is expected to be jointly mobilised from the international community as extra-budgetary resources. The UNSC with its resolution commits to exploring 'all viable options' in the event of significant shortfalls in resource mobilisation. This commitment raises the question of whether 'all viable options' might include the use of assessed contributions beyond the 75% cap. Another matter that seeks clarity in this regard is what accounts as a 'contribution' according to what is stated under paragraph 9 of the resolution.

The other aspect of Resolution 2719 that is expected to receive attention is the decision-making process in the

authorisation of AU-led PSOs that falls under Resolution 2719 envisaged in operational paragraph 3. This envisages a process that requires a workflow that covers a series of sequential activities: a) consultation by the Chairperson of the AU Commission and the Secretary-General of the UN for the conduct of a strategic assessment (of emerging and ongoing conflict situations) with a range of options for response, b) a joint strategic assessment guided, among others, by 'regular joint review and reporting processes to ensure oversight by the Security Council of all authorised operations that access United Nations assessed contributions', c) preparation of the report of the strategic assessment and the draft concept of operations (CONOPs), d) decision by the PSC on the report and the draft CONOPs, d) transmission of the PSC decision to the UNSC, and e) a consideration and decision by the UNSC. The key issues that the decision-making process envisaged under operational paragraph 3 include the kind of working arrangement that needs to be established between the AU and the UN and whether or not there is a need for engagement with and greenlight from the UNSC in starting the initial process of consultation between the AU Commission Chairperson and the UN Secretary-General as well as the mechanism for triggering the process.

Furthermore, the AUC report and briefing are expected to explore the conception of a 'case-by-case', as it can have different outcomes as to the response to the request of UN-assessed contributions by the AU. Some member states of the PSC are of the view that the fact that the assessed contribution is granted on a case-by-case basis does not secure adequate, predictable, and sustainable financing of AU-led PSOs. This is because one of the outcomes for a case-by-case consideration of AU-led PSOs could be the rejection of the request by the UNSC. In these cases, the PSC will be required to answer questions like, what will be the contingency plan in scenarios where UN-assessed contributions fall short. It is therefore expected that the PSC will develop

a position on the issue as to what should be adopted in examining different conflict cases.

As a follow-up to previous discussions, the PSC is also expected to continue deliberations on the identification of the test case for implementation of Resolution 2719. It is worth recalling in this respect that the [1217th session](#) of the PSC that decided on the deployment of a post-ATMIS mission to Somalia in paragraph 17 stipulated the PSC's request 'that a dedicated funding mechanism, through UN-assessed contributions in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 2719 (2023)...be established to guarantee the financial stability of the mission.' Part of the issue in this context is how this decision of the PSC can be pursued in the implementation of the various aspects for authorisation for access to UN-assessed contributions under Resolution 2719.

With respect to mission support, Resolution 2719 provides that 'the Security Council will decide on the most appropriate mission model, prioritising the establishment of a United Nations Support Office, which enables the use of the fiduciary processes and reporting of the United Nations system or as may be necessary through any other mission model.' The experience from AMISOM/ATMIS shows that there is a need for aligning the strategic logistic frameworks of the AU and the UN. Particularly where AU-led operations require enforcement action, there is not only a robust logistical support framework that meets the demands of such kinetic operations and the tempo of such operations which may necessitate decentralisation and prepositioning of supplies. Part of the consideration in tomorrow's PSC retreat is how to ensure the development of such a strategic logistics support framework and the kind of steps required to avoid some of the shortfalls that undermined the effectiveness of AMISOM including airlift capacity and availability of force enablers.

The expected outcome is a conclusions document of the retreat

that will later be submitted to future PSC sessions on the matter. The PSC is expected to commend the AU Commission for developing the matrix of the UNSC Resolution 2719, the position paper and further. The PSC may also state that it looks forward to the conclusion of the development of the position paper. The Council may further call on member states and the AU Commission to utilise the upcoming 18th PSC-UNSC Annual Joint Consultative Meeting in October, to engage with stakeholders, including the A3, to forge a common understanding of the resolution.