

Consideration and adoption of the Cairo Roadmap on Enhancing Peacekeeping Operations: From Mandate to Exit

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Tomorrow (15 October) the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council is scheduled to convene its 955th meeting to consider and adopt the Cairo Roadmap on Enhancing Peacekeeping Operations: From Mandate to Exit through email exchange. The report and statements for the meeting will be circulated to all PSC Members through emails and the expected outcome will be circulated through silence procedure.

The 12th ordinary meeting of the Specialized Technical Committee on Defence, Safety and Security held in Cairo on 19 December 2019 has decided to 'adopt, in principle, the "Cairo Roadmap on enhancing peacekeeping Operations: from mandate to exit". Moreover, it requested Member States to share their inputs in the subsequent two-month period to the AUC, in order to be presented to the AU Policy Organs.

Subsequently, the 33rd Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly held in February 2020 adopted the decision of the STC.

The Cairo Roadmap was developed to support the reforms articulated in UN Secretary General Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) initiative that was launched in March 2018. The A4P principally aims at establishing a collective understanding of challenges faced by peacekeeping and to renew political commitment towards peacekeeping operations. The A4P initiative's major tenets were consolidated through the

Declaration of Shared Commitments on UN Peacekeeping Operations endorsed by UN member states in September 2018. The declaration particularly identified critical areas including the promotion of political solutions to conflict, protection of civilians, safety and security of peacekeepers, performance and accountability of all peacekeeping components, the impact of peacekeeping on sustaining peace, partnership as well as conduct.

The Cairo Roadmap was subsequently developed after a high-level meeting was held in Cairo, Egypt on 'Enhancing the Performance of Peacekeeping operations'. Building on the A4P and the Declaration of Shared Commitments as well as insights from reviews on UN peace operations and peacebuilding and the inputs from the STC meeting and further subsequent submissions from AU member states, it presented recommended actions that the various role players of UN peacekeeping can take.

The Roadmap is organized along five priority areas. The first priority, which is in line with the Declaration of Shared Commitments on UN Peacekeeping Operations, is around the need to enhance political solution and the importance of political objectives to guide the mandate of peacekeeping missions. In this regard the Cairo Roadmap proposes a 'quadrilateral consultations' among the host nations, the UN Security Council, troop/police-contributing countries (TCCs) and the UN Secretariat as well as relevant regional bodies. This process is essential in also enchainning ownership of the political process by the host countries themselves. PSO's mandate design and implementation have to be anchored on a clear political strategy, informed by the needs of conflict-affected countries.

While the primacy of political strategy is rightly emphasized, complementarity and harmonization of efforts as well as strong support for and consensus on the strategy among various peace and security actors at different levels including UN, AU and Regional Economic Communities (RECs)/Regional Mechanisms (RMs)

are critical factors for the effective implementation of the political strategy and collective and coordinated action. Another issue which is of particular significance for members of the PSC is the degree to which the views of the AU and RECs are given serious hearing and substantive weight in designing and implementing peacekeeping operations.

The second priority aims at increasing the performance of peacekeeping operation through set parameters including clear and focused mandate and objectives of operation as well as adequate resources. In this regard, the Roadmap also indicates issues related to accountability and the need for a framework that systematically tracks performance.

The clear definition of objectives of operation and ensuring an effective performance of peacekeeping mission is intimately related to the quadrilateral consultation that forms part of the first priority area. The coordination of the actors and the development of a common strategic position will have a direct effect on the effectiveness of the mission.

The other key element of this second pillar relates to resources. Ensuring predictable and sustainable financing for PSOs has been a major difficulty especially in the context of protracted conflicts. It would also be of interest for PSC members to share their input on the need to globally scale up efforts to enhance resource mobilization for peacekeeping missions, including for those AU led or mandated operations authorized by the UNSC. In this respect, it is worth recalling the importance of sustaining the agenda of financing AU operations that the African 3 non-permanent members of the UNSC (A3) have championed during the past five years.

The third pillar highlights the need for well-trained and well-equipped uniformed personnel. This includes boosting PSO trainings to increase preparedness and ensuring personnel's technical and operational requirements set by the UN are fulfilled. Moreover the meaningful participation of women in

peacekeeping including by reaching the target of the UN to ensure for women's participation at 15% in military positions and 20% among police deployments are indicated in the Roadmap. These efforts are expected to be accompanied by the implementation of the UN zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse.

Given that the Roadmap covers the full cycle of the peacekeeping from mandate to exit, the fourth pillar focuses on the transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding. Currently, this is an issue that is very much alive in the context of Sudan with respect to the joint UN-AU mission in Darfur. Proper planning for and creating conditions for smooth transition is critical both to sustain the gains registered and avoid the emergence of security gaps. Rather than a sequential approach to transition, this may entail a phased approach that facilitates increase in peacebuilding interventions parallel to the drawdown or reconfiguration of the make-up and areas of focus of peacekeeping operations as part of the exit strategy.

Finally, the Roadmap gives recognition to the role of peacekeeping missions in responding to emerging challenges including natural disasters, health and environmental crisis. This is important in expanding the understanding of security by integrating non-traditional security matters including disaster induced humanitarian crisis and health, which have increasingly become major emerging security issues.

In fact the AU through its policy guideline on the role of the African Standby Force in Humanitarian Action and Natural Disaster Support has developed a framework to ensure peacekeeping troops play a broader mandate beyond the standard operational matters. In the context of a pandemic such as COVID19, peace operations can play the critical role of supporting the implementation of public health measures and mitigating the adverse impact of such health or other natural events on peace efforts. In the current realities of a global economy severely battered by the pandemic, there is also the

issue of resource constraints which can adversely affect peacekeeping.

The expected outcome is a communiqué. The PSC is expected to adopt the Cairo Roadmap. It may reiterate the key issues raised in the Roadmap including the importance of sustainable political solutions to conflict, the need to enhance ownership of host countries in political processes, in the design and implementation of peacekeeping missions as well the need to strengthen the capacity of peacekeeping components. The PSC may underline the importance of collective action and global commitment in strengthening the effectiveness of peacekeeping missions through the provision of adequate capacity and financing. The Council may also further reiterate the importance for the UN and various global actors to work closely and in coordination with the regional organizations including the AU as well as RECs/RMs in designing and implementing the mandate of peacekeeping missions. The PSC may further reiterate its previous pronouncements on the need for predictable and sustainable financing of peace support operations including through UN assessed contributions support to AU led or mandated peace support operations authorized by the UNSC, as a collective global public good.