

# Discussion on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development in Africa

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Tomorrow (23 October) the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC) is scheduled to hold its 958th session. This session has two agenda items. The first is the discussion on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) in Africa. This covers consideration of the implementation of PCRD and country specific PCRD work focusing on the Central African Republic, South Sudan and The Gambia.

Following the opening statement of the Chairperson of the PSC, PSC will hear the statement of the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, Smail Chergui. This is followed by briefings from the representatives of the Central African Republic, South Sudan and The Gambia.

PCRD is an important dimension of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). Despite the adoption in 2006 of the AU PCRD Policy, implementation of the Policy has until recent years been slow. In terms of operationalizing the policy, the establishment of the AU Commission inter-departmental Task Force on PCRD was critical both for pulling the efforts of the AU system together and initiating PCRD interventions. With the membership of the AU Liaison Offices and RECs/RMs, the Task Force carried out joint activities including assessment missions to countries in transition. Another major development in terms of the operationalization of the PCRD policy is the establishment of the PCRD Centre.

The Centre, headquartered in Cairo, Egypt, is expected to further enhance the efforts of the Inter-departmental Task Force on PCRD, which ensures that the various departments of

the AU Commission coordinate their efforts on PCRD issues in Africa. The Centre is also meant to provide, under the guidance of the AU Policy Organs, technical expertise to improve timeliness, effectiveness, and coherence of activities in post-conflict countries on the Continent.

In an effort to translate the PCRD Policy into operational frameworks for PCRD interventions three key policy documents were developed and launched in November 2018. These are: the Five-year Results-based Framework on PCRD, the Guidelines Note for the Implementation of the African Union Post-conflict Reconstruction and Development Policy and a Policy Brief on African Union's Quick Impact Project implementation: Lessons learned from Somalia.

Implementation of PCRD is also pursued as part of AU's support to peace processes in affected countries through the various AU missions and liaison offices. There are AU Missions in Somalia (AMISOM); in South Sudan (AUMISS); in Mali and Sahel (MISAHEL); Liaison Offices in Burundi, CAR, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Cote D'Ivoire, Sudan, Madagascar and Guinea Bissau as well as a Technical Support Team (AUTSTG) in The Gambia. As pointed in a recent report of the AU Commission Chairperson to the PSC, in these countries, the AU is engaged in a wide range of peacebuilding activities including supporting the implementation of the Somalia Transition Plan (STP); the Revitalized Agreement for Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan; and the 2015 Algiers Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali and the Sahel.

In terms of PSC's role, it has addressed the issue of PCRD in its sessions in various ways, although this lacks being systematic and comprehensive. The sessions of the PSC on the situations in the Central African Republic (CAR), Darfur, Sudan, Guinea Bissau; the Lake Chad Basin, Mali and the Sahel; South Sudan, Sudan and Somalia often address PCRD processes in these conflict situations. Similarly, the various thematic sessions of the PSC address specific elements of PCRD such as

Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration; Security Sector Reforms; Women Peace and Security; Transitional Justice and Reconciliation.

Notwithstanding these various developments for operationalization of the PCRDR component of the APSA, challenges still abound. As highlighted in the conclusions of the PSC's Retreat held in Rabat, Morocco in June 2019, some of the major challenges relating to PCRDR include 'lack of tailored funding for PCRDR' and the imperative of post-conflict countries to enhance their ownership of the process. Coordination has also been highlighted as an important area that requires attention. It has thus been underscored in the context of the 948th meeting of the PSC that 'the implementation of PCRDR since 2006 manifests the need for inclusive consultations between the post-conflict country and the AU, RECs/RMs, as well as with partners in order to create an environment that facilitates coordinated mobilization of political will and commitment, human and financial resources, as well as technical expertise.' From the perspective of the role of the PSC in providing strategic guidance on PCRDR, the constitution and operationalization of the PSC Sub-Committee on PCRDR remain outstanding.

As far as the briefing from the representative of CAR is concerned, it is of major interest for the PSC to hear from Smail Chergui and the CAR representative on the preparations for national elections scheduled for December 2020. One of the major issues for the PSC to address in this respect is determining the technical and logistical needs of the CAR and how the AU could contribute, within the framework of its electoral support to member states, towards meeting the technical, logistical and institutional needs of the CAR. The importance of this cannot be underestimated. At its 884th session, in underscoring the importance of an inclusive and consensual, the PSC deemed the election to be an important process in 'consolidating the democratic gains and stability

in the country'.

Another area of interest for the PSC on PCRD in the CAR is the implementation of the Peace and Reconciliation Agreement of February 2019. In this respect, the session can be informed about the PCRD needs of the CAR based on the update from both Chergui and the representative of the CAR on the status of the peace and reconciliation process within the framework of the African Initiative and the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of armed groups as well as security sector reform. The AU is providing support for the reinforcement of the capacities of the national Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration and Security Sector Reform (DDR and SSR) Coordination Mechanisms. It is also to be recalled that within its Quick Impact/Peace Strengthening Project Policy framework, the Commission, through its Liaison Offices, provided support for the establishment of a National Human Rights Commission.

The impact of the conflict in the CAR on state institution and the already poor socio-economic and political infrastructure is such that the CAR should continue to receive attention and support in order to implement its post-conflict reconstruction activities.

With respect to South Sudan, it is to be recalled that the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) of September 2018 assigns the AU a set of critical PCRD responsibilities. Among these are mobilization of resources and provision of support to governance and security sector reforms, humanitarian assistance, transitional justice, reconciliation and healing. The briefing from the representative of South Sudan is expected to update the Council on the status of implementation of the R-ARCSS. The specific areas of interest for the PSC to receive update on include the establishment of sub-national structures of government, the plan for the constitution of the legislative body of the Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity (RTGoNU), the status of implementation of the

permanent ceasefire and the transitional security arrangements, which are all critical for successful PCRDR in South Sudan. It is to be recalled that the PSC at its 945th session expressed 'deep concern over the slow pace in the implementation of the transitional security arrangements leading to reunification and reintegration of the NUF which is undermining efforts towards the full implementation of the R-ARCSS'. Other aspects of PCRDR that also require attention include the implementation of the transitional justice institutions under Chapter V of the R-ARCSS.

As far as The Gambia is concerned, it is anticipated that the PSC would hear from the representative of the Gambia about the transition in the Gambia. In this respect, some of the areas expected to be covered during the briefing include the establishment of the National Commission for Human Rights, the activities of the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission, and the reorganization and reform of the defense and security sectors. The issue of the constitutional making process and the implications of the failure of parliament to adopt the new draft constitution for the transitional process and PCRDR in the Gambia could also arise in tomorrow's session.

Also, of interest for the discussion on PCRDR in The Gambia is the status of and activities of the African Union Technical Support Team to the Gambia (AUTSTG). It is to be recalled that pursuant to the request of Government to the AU Peace and Security Council in March 2017, and based on the decision of the PC at its 695th meeting held on 15 June 2017, the AU Commission deployed the first batch of a Ten-member African Union Technical Support Team to the Gambia (AUTSTG) at the end of September 2018. Similarly, on 12 December 2018, the African Union Commission deployed two additional members of the AUTSTG, namely: Senior Rule of Law Expert; and the Human Rights Expert (Human Rights Commission). In August 2020, the mandate of the AUTSTG has been extended until the end of 2020. The representative of The Gambia may

request for the continued support of the AUTSTG.

The expected outcome of the session is a communiqué. The PSC may urge the need to activate its PCRDR Sub-Committee. The Council may welcome the establishment of the PCRDR Centre and may encourage the centre working with the Inter-Departmental Task Force on PCRDR to develop support areas specific to the PCRDR needs of the three countries within the framework of the respective peace agreements and transitional frameworks. The Council may further call for supporting the PCRDR and peace building needs and works in these countries working in collaboration with the AU liaison office in CAR and the AU mission in South Sudan, the regional and international actors including the UN Peacebuilding Commission.