

PSC Briefing on South Sudan and Consideration of the Report on the PSC Field Mission

Automatic Heading TextDate | 26 April, 2018

Tomorrow (26 April), the Peace and Security Council (PSC) will receive briefing on the Situation in South Sudan and consider the report of the PSC field mission to South Sudan that took place

from 14-19 April 2018. Andrews Atta-Asamoah, member of the United Nations (UN) Panel of Experts on South Sudan is expected to brief the PSC on the situation in South Sudan within the framework of the mandate of the Panel. The regional bound Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) is also expected to make a statement. Others expected to intervene include the Special Representative of the AU Commission Chairperson and South Sudan.

The five-day field mission was a follow up to a decision of the PSC at its meeting held on 8 February 2018 to undertake a field mission to South Sudan in the month of April 2018. The February meeting scheduled and planned the mission with an objective of putting pressure on the stakeholders to the conflict to implement the Agreement for the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (ARCSS), and to promote and support the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) led High Level Revitalization Forum (HLRF). The mission was preceded by a crucial visit on 11-12 April 2018 to South Africa by Moussa Faki, Chairperson of the AU Commission where he discussed the peace process in South Sudan with President Cyril Ramaphosa of South Africa, and met with the head of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement in Opposition (SPLM/iO)

Riek Machar to urge support for the HLRF. Tomorrow's meeting will receive updates on the HLRF and the third round of peace talks, initially scheduled for 26-30 April now postponed to 2 – 6 May 2018.

The PSC delegation which included all members of the Council, and led by the chair of the month for April, Nigeria, met with wide range of government officials and civil society stakeholders and with members of intergovernmental and international organizations in South Sudan. The delegation had discussions with President Salva Kiir and Vice-President Taban Deng Gai on the HLRF and the hybrid court among others. Members of the Steering Committee of the National Dialogue, the Special Representation of the Secretary General of the United Nations (UN), Head of the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (JMEC) and the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring Mechanism (CTSAMM) are other stakeholders the PSC delegation conversed with in its mission on the peace process, protection of civilians and humanitarian assistance. The delegation also met with the African ambassadors in Juba, leaders of faith-based organizations, and visited the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and conversed with their representatives on the humanitarian situation in South Sudan.

Tomorrow's meeting is taking place in the background of the fresh eruption of violence last week in areas near the capital Juba, and the Gezira town in Rubkona county. The SPLM/iO accused the government of major offensive while Juba admitted heavy fighting with rebels in Gezira town. The field mission by the PSC indicates a more visible role by the Council in initiatives to resolve the South Sudan crisis, and increased interest to add impetus to the five years long peace process by IGAD. The emphasis by the PSC on the need to upscale role by the AU High Level Ad Hoc Committee and the AU High Representative for South Sudan, Alpha Oumar Konare is an

indication to a bigger AU role in the process while recognizing IGAD as the lead. The field mission and the call for more role for AU in South Sudan came as complementarity between the PSC and IGAD in efforts to resolve the South Sudan conflict was witnessing improvement in line with the principle of subsidiarity, and as patience run low towards the continued violation of the secession of hostilities and the broader agreement demanding a coordinated and serious response.

Increased AU role in the South Sudan crisis and peace process will demand synergy among the different organizations, initiatives and mechanisms. Ways to improve regular interactions and updates between the AU High Level Ad Hoc Committee, the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (JMEC), the AU Commission and UN system to support the IGAD led efforts will be discussed by the meeting.

The IGAD Council of Ministers which held its 61st Extra-Ordinary Session on 26 March 2018 in Addis Ababa decided to impose targeted sanctions against individual violators of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA). The meeting also referred the case to the PSC for 'appropriate punitive measures' targeting spoilers of the process. The IGAD proposed sanctions are expected to receive serious attention by council members. One of the issues that will take center stage at the briefing will be the issue of the hybrid court. The PSC delegation raised and discussed the need for enhancing cooperation between the AU and Juba to materialize the establishment of the court as an institutional foundation for the transitional justice process in South Sudan. The PSC sees the hybrid court, which is envisioned as a major component of the Agreement for the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (ARCSS) signed on 15 August 2015, as a major pillar of the process that needs urgent attention and action. The meeting is expected to reinforce its call at its 8 February meeting for the immediate signing of the Memorandum of

Understanding (MoU) on the establishment of the hybrid court and repeat its request on Juba to 'ensure the timely domestication of the MoU through the Transitional Legislative Assembly and to step up efforts in establishing the Commission for Truth, Reconciliation and Healing, and the Compensation and Reparations Authority as provided for by the ARCSS'. The meeting will also emphasize the need for synergy and harmony between the HLRF, the National Dialogue and the Reunification process of the SPLM.

The report by the PSC delegation will also cover the state of the humanitarian situation in South Sudan and the issue of protection of civilians. The meeting is expected to be tough on activities that disrupt and obstruct delivery and distribution of life-saving humanitarian assistance for the IDPs, and the broader South Sudanese public. In this light, the meeting will look at the delay in the deployment of the Regional Protection Force (RPF) and expected to pass strong call to the United Nation Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), the Transitional Government of National Unity (TGoNU) and troop contributing countries to realize the civilian protection unit in the next few months.

The expected outcome of this session is a communique.