

Briefing on Sustainable financing of African Peace & Security Agenda under the UN Charter

Automatic Heading TextDate |03 December, 2018

Tomorrow (3 December 2018) the Peace and Security Council (PSC) is scheduled to hold a briefing session on sustainable financing for African Peace and Security Agenda in the context of Chapter VIII of the UN Charter. It is expected that Woinshet Tadesse, Ethiopia's Permanent Representative to the African Union (AU), will provide the briefing to the PSC representing members of the African 3 members (A3) of the UN Security Council (UNSC).

The focus of tomorrow's session is expected to be the draft resolution on financing of AU led or mandated peace support operations authorized by the UNSC that has been under negotiation in the UNSC. While major progress has been achieved in the quality of partnership, the issue of predictable and sustainable financing of AU peace support operations has remained a major area of disagreement. At the 18 July briefing at the UNSC, Smail Chergui, AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, observed that the AU has consistently advocated for more predictable and sustainable funding for AU peace operations through UN assessed contributions.

In the briefing, the A3 are expected to inform the PSC the efforts they have made in championing the longstanding demand of the AU for predictable funding to AU led peace support operations authorized by the UNSC including through the use of the UN assessed contributions. This is in line with the PSC communiqué of 30 May 2017 which underlined the critical role

of the A3 in advancing AU Peace and Security Agenda at the UN level, in particular with regard to reaching a substantive resolution on the use of UN assessed contributions to support AU mandated or authorised PSOs.

Initiated by the A3, the draft resolution, if adopted, is meant to establish the principle that AU mandated or authorized PSOs authorized by the UN Security Council should be financed through UN assessed contributions, with decisions on the financing of specific missions to be taken on a case-by-case basis. As Côte d'Ivoire's permanent representative to the UN noted in the UNSC session in July, the draft resolution 'does not trigger the immediate provision of funding, but rather provides a framework for the Council's assessment ... for consideration on a case-by-case basis'. The briefing affords PSC members to discuss where the negotiations in the UNSC over this draft resolution stand.

When the PSC adopted its communiqué of 30 May 2017, there were two requirements of UNSC Resolution 2320 (2016) for the fulfillment of which the AU was tasked to take appropriate measures. The first was the implementation of the Peace Fund. The Second was the establishment of the relevant framework for ensuring compliance by AU PSOs with international humanitarian law and human rights law. In terms of the effort to secure the adoption of the draft resolution when it is tabled before the UNSC this month, this session offers an opportunity for the PSC to review the progress made in fulfilling these requirements. This is an area on which the Department of Peace and Security provides update to the PSC.

With respect to the Peace Fund, the AU has achieved the target that was set in PSC communiqué of 30 May 2017. With \$65 million collected, the Peace Fund is on target to meet its funding target from the contribution of AU member states projected to reach 100 million in early 2019. The Peace Fund was officially launched at the 11th Extraordinary Session on 17 November 2018 and the members of the Board of Trustees

representing the 5 AU Regions have also been appointed. This governance body was expanded to include representation of the UN and the EU in the Board to ensure the highest fiduciary standards.

The AU also made major progress with respect to instituting the relevant frameworks for ensuring compliance of AU peace support operations with international standards including human rights and international humanitarian laws. At its session held on 29 November 2018, the AU PSC adopted the AU Policy Documents on the Prevention and Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and on Conduct and Discipline.

Given the progress made with respect to the requirements set under Resolution 2320 (2016), the draft resolution initiated by the A3 seeks to follow up on the intent of Resolution 2317 (2017). This notably refers to the intention that the UNSC expressed in this resolution 'to give further consideration to practical steps that can be taken, and the conditions necessary, to establish the mechanism through which African Union led peace support operations authorized by the Security Council and under the Security Council's authority under Chapter VIII of the Charter could be partly financed through United Nations assessed contributions, on a case by case basis, in compliance with relevant agreed standards and mechanisms.'

It is also an opportunity to reflect on the prospects for the adoption by the UNSC of the resolution when it is considered in the course of the month. Within the UNSC, there are differences over the draft resolution between the A3 and the US in particular. In the 18 July briefing at the UNSC, the United States will not consider use of assessed contribution to support AU operations under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, until benchmarks for financial transparency, conduct and discipline and human rights are demonstrably implemented across AU peace organizations and operations.

At the 20 November UNSC open debate held under the Presidency

of China, the US raised other concerns. It in particular noted unanswered questions about the implication of support from assessed contributions on UNSC's authority and the need for members to have time to ensure full political and legislative support from capitals. It is not clear if the US would change its positions when the draft resolution is tabled at the UNSC for adoption.

While the expectation of the PSC is for the draft resolution to be adopted setting a framework for the UNSC to take decision for use of assessed contributions to support AU led or mandated peace support operations authorized by the UNSC on a case-by-case basis, there are two issues of interest for tomorrow's session. The first is whether the consideration and adoption of the draft resolution will happen as scheduled in December 2018. The second is the scope of conditions that may be included if the final version of the resolution is agreed.

The expected outcome of the session is a communiqué. Drawing on the benchmarks set in the 30 May 2017 communiqué, this is expected to highlight the progress made towards meeting the requirements of resolution 2320 (2016). The communiqué is also expected to urge members of the UNSC to adopt the draft resolution that sets to elevate the strategic partnership between the AU and the UN to a higher level.