

Update on the AU Reform – Review of the Peace and Security Council

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Update on PSC Reform

Today (25 April), the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) will receive update on the 'AU Reform – Review of the Peace and Security Council'. Pierre MouKoko Mbonjou, Head of the AU Reform Implementation Unit (RIU) in the Office of the Chairperson of the AU Commission is expected to brief the PSC.

Currently, the RIU is in the process of undertaking the review of the various organs of the AU and is convening consultations with AU organs. In its decision Assembly/AU/Dec.635(XXVIII) on the Report on "The Imperative to Strengthen our Union: Proposed Recommendations for the Institutional Reform of the African Union, the AU Assembly decided that 'the PSC should be reformed to ensure that it meets the ambition foreseen in its Protocol, by strengthening its working methods and its role in conflict prevention and crisis management'. This session is the first opportunity for PSC members to convene a meeting with the RIU within the framework of this Assembly decision.

In his briefing to the PSC, Mr Mbonjou is expected to offer insights both on what the review of the PSC would focus on and the methodology to be used in identifying areas for review. It would highlight that, instead of a reform requiring amendment of the PSC Protocol, the review of the PSC would follow strictly the terms of the decision of the AU Assembly, and hence limited to the 'strengthening of its (PSC's) working methods and its role in conflict prevention and management.'

The briefing would also highlight on how the review and assessment of the PSC is to be undertaken and the envisaged role of the PSC in the process. The review, expected to use consultant, is anticipated to deliver draft paper outlining the challenges and systematically presenting existing proposals on strengthening the role of the PSC in conflict prevention and crises management. The briefing is expected to indicate how the PSC participates in the review and assessment process, including the option of engaging the PSC Committee of Experts on the development of proposals on the reform of the PSC.

In terms of the methodology, apart from review of existing reviews, assessments and evaluations, the review and assessment process is anticipated to cover the recommendations from the conclusions of the PSC's many working method retreats. There is already a document of the PSC Secretariat highlighting the various proposals and the lack of implementation of the various proposals. The review is also expected to rely on the ongoing APSA/AGA Study that the AU Peace and Security Department leads.

For members of the PSC questions of interest include those relating to the PSC decision-making processes, on timelines of finalization of the review and authority for validation of the proposed recommendations. Other issues of interest also include working relationships and the institutional and resource implications of PSC's work, including on the use of the finances in the Peace Fund.

No outcome is expected from this update. But, the PSC may consider providing guidelines on modalities of the review and assessment of its works and provision of further updates on the assessment process and final adoption of the proposed reforms.