

Provisional Program of Work for the Month of February 2020

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Djibouti assumes the role of the monthly chairpersonship of the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC) for the month of February. The provisional program of work, prepared under Mohamed Idriss Farah, Permanent Representative of Djibouti to the AU, involves some three substantive sessions. These include a meeting at the Heads of State and Government level and another one at ministerial level. Additionally, the PSC will also undertake a field mission.

On 8 February, the PSC is scheduled to hold its first meeting at a summit level focusing on two situations: the situation in Libya and the one in the Sahel. Despite the flurry of non-African peace efforts including the declaration signed during the Berlin Conference, the deterioration of the situation in Libya continues unabated. The focus on Libya follows the meeting of the AU High Level Ad Hoc Committee on Libya, held in Brazzaville, the Republic of Congo on 30 January. The dire consequences of the spike in the frequency and geographic spread of terrorist attacks and intercommunal violence in the Sahel has similarly become gravely concerning, requiring summit level engagement.

On 9-10 February the 33rd Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly will take place. The PSC is expected to submit to the Assembly its report on its activities and the state of peace and security pursuant to Article 7 of the PSC Protocol.

On 13 February the PSC is expected to consider three agenda items. First, the Council is expected to receive a briefing on the future of AMISOM and upcoming elections in Somalia. This

PSC session is also taking ahead of the withdrawal of additional troops planned during the month as part of the drawdown of AMISOM.

In the second part of the session the PSC will discuss the preparation of its field mission to South Sudan and Sudan. Lastly, the PSC is expected to consider and adopt the PSC provisional programme of work for the month of March 2020.

From 16-20, the PSC will undertake a field mission to Sudan and South Sudan. In October, at its 889th session the PSC decided to undertake a field mission to Sudan and Darfur in early 2020 as part of the overall efforts aimed at contributing towards the promotion of peace in the country. The field mission to Sudan follows the meeting that the PSC held on Sudan on 30 January focusing on addressing the challenges facing the transition in Sudan, including its continued listing in the US list of countries sponsoring terrorism.

The visit to South Sudan comes as a follow up to its 894th session decision in November to undertake a field visit to South Sudan in February 2020 before the expiration of the 100 days extension of the pre- transitional period.

On 24 February the PSC will undertake a preparatory meeting for the ministerial meeting in Djibouti.

On 26 February, the PSC ministerial meeting is expected to address two agenda items. The first is on the challenges relating to the Horn of Africa and Red Sea. It is to be recalled that the PSC held a meeting on the situation in the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea in November 2018 at ambassadorial level. The ministerial session will build on the previous meeting.

The second agenda item will be a briefing on maritime security in Africa. This will take place in relation to the Lomé Charter adopted in October 2016 at the Extraordinary Summit on

Maritime Security and Safety and Development in Africa in Togo and based on previous PSC sessions on the topic.

In addition to these agenda items, the provisional program of work indicates in footnotes possible meetings of the Military Staff Committee and Committee of Experts for which the dates are yet to be set.