

Provisional Program of Work for the Month of January 2022

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Ghana assumes the role of chairing the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC) for the month of January. In January, Ghana also starts its two-year term on the UN Security Council (UNSC) as a non-permanent member representing Africa. The provisional program of work for the month includes five substantive sessions—two country/region specific and three thematic sessions.

On 5 January, the Committee of Experts is expected to meet to consider the report on the activities of the Peace and Security Council and the state of peace and security in Africa. On 11 and 13 January, the PSC will convene at Ambassadorial level to consider and adopt the same report, which will be submitted to the Assembly in February.

The first substantive session of the year is scheduled to happen on 14 January to consider the renewal of the mandate of the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF). The PSC last renewed MNJTF's mandate at its 973rd session held on 18 January 2021, for a period of twelve months, effective from 31 January 2021. Apart from mandate renewal, the Council may receive update on the activities of the MNJTF in line with the relevant provisions contained in the Communiqué PSC/AHG/COMM.2 (CDLXXXIV) of 29 January 2015. The continued use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) by Boko Haram for reconnaissance operations and capability gaps within the MNJTF were areas of concern to the Council during its previous sessions. In light of this, members of the PSC are likely to hear from the AU Commission about efforts to engage with partners and other stakeholders to mobilize support for the taskforce and mitigate its capability gaps.

On 17 January, the PSC will convene at a ministerial level to hold a general debate of the PSC and the A3+1 on African matters in the UNSC agenda. This session comes not long after the conclusion of the eighth high level seminar on peace and security in Africa that took place in Oran, Algeria, in early December 2021. The high-level seminar serves as a platform to facilitate close interaction and enhance coordination between the PSC and the A3 (the three African non-permanent members of the UNSC). It is to be recalled that the PSC, at its last session on the A3 (983rd meeting convened on 4 March 2021), stressed the importance of providing 'strategic guidance' to the A3 on peace and security issues ahead of the UNSC meetings to support their role in advancing a unified African voice at the UNSC. In this context, the upcoming general debate is pivotal to exchange views and forge a common understanding among members of the PSC and A3+1 on African files in the UNSC. Furthermore, the session offers good opportunity to further consolidate coordination between PSC and the A3.

On the following day, 18 January, PSC will consider and adopt its provisional program of work for February through email exchange.

On 25 January, the PSC is expected to receive a briefing on South Sudan. It is to be recalled that the PSC undertook a three-day field mission to South Sudan in March 2021. The report of the field mission was considered during PSC's 990th session held on 13 April. In that session, while the Council noted the 'steady progress' in the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS), it also urged the Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity (R-TGoNU) to work on all outstanding provisions of the R-ARCSS notably Chapter II (transitional security arrangements) and Chapter V (Transitional justice). As the deadline for the transitional period fast approaches—scheduled to end in February 2023—the briefing would allow members of the PSC to take stock of the

progresses and challenges in the implementation of the revitalized agreement and discuss the way forward.

On 27 January, there will be an open session on 'promoting constitutionalism, democracy and inclusive governance to strengthen peace, security and stability in Africa'. At the Council's 791st session convened in August 2018, it was agreed to dedicate an annual session on the implementation of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, though not followed up. The upsurge of unconstitutional change of government in 2021 and its destabilizing effect however makes this session very timely. The session is expected to highlight the need to deepen democratic culture, constitutionalism and political governance for a peaceful and stable continent. To that end, the contribution of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) and the twin architectures of AGA (African Governance Architecture) and APSA (African Peace and Security Architecture) could also be explored.

The last session of the month is scheduled to happen on 31 January to receive a briefing on elections in Africa. The last briefing was held during the Council's 1034th meeting in September 2021 where the Council considered the report of the Chairperson of the AU Commission on elections in Africa held between January and June 2021. This briefing therefore follows the previous one, which is expected to cover elections in Africa held during the period from July to December 2021. Like in the previous sessions, the briefing will be based on the report of the Chairperson of the Commission that provides an overview of elections in the continent, in addition to highlighting key trends in governance, emerging patterns in the conduct of elections, AU's electoral support and interventions as well as policy recommendations.

In addition to the above agenda items, the provisional program of work also indicates in footnote on the possibility of convening a session on the status of AMISOM post-2021 without setting a specific date. This session is likely to happen soon

given the most recent milestone reached with the signing of an agreement between the AU and the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) on 29 December 2021, outlining principles and modalities for 'reconfigured' AMISOM. The session may also consider the latest dispute between President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed 'Farmaajo' and Prime Minister Mohamed Hussein Roble and its implication on the long overdue presidential election and the overall peace and stability of Somalia.