

# Provisional Program of Work for the Month of July 2023

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Date | July 2023

Senegal will be chairing the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC) for the month of July 2023. The PSC's Provisional Programme of Work includes four substantive sessions. One of the sessions will address country/region-specific issues, while the remaining three will cover thematic topics. All of the planned sessions are expected to be held physically, except for the only session that will be held at the ministerial level. The PSC is also expected to conduct a field mission to the Sahel during the month.

On 6 July, the Peace and Security Council (PSC) will convene its first substantive session of the month through a consultative meeting with representatives of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and the Economic Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC). The holding of this meeting is in line with Articles 5 and 22 of the AU Constitutive Act, which establishes the ECOSOCC, and Article 20 of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the PSC. This is the second time that the PSC will be convening a consultative meeting with CSOs and ECOSOCC. It is to be recalled that the inaugural consultative meeting took place in September 2022. The convening of this second consultation promises to regularize the annual consultative meeting pursuant to the decision of the inaugural session. In the exchange, a selected CSOs from the five regions are expected to brief the PSC on their programs and activities. Those CSOs are also expected to share their proposals on how to enhance their cooperation with the PSC.

On account of the mid-year meeting of the Executive Council and the coordination meeting of the AU and the Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs) taking place during the week of 10 July, members of the PSC will be occupied with the session of the Permanent Representatives Committee of the AU and the will not accordingly convene session during that period.

On 21 July, the PSC will hold its second substantive and the only country specific session for the month. In this session, the PSC will be briefed on the situation in the Sahel. The last time the PSC discussed this issue was during its 1166<sup>th</sup> session in October 2022. However, discussions were focused on the political transition of Burkina Faso, Guinea and Mali during a session held in April 2023. During this session, the PSC requested for the revitalization of the Transition Monitoring Mechanisms for all countries in political transition as set out in PSC decisions. It is envisaged that the session will be briefed on the activities of the ECOWAS and CEN-SAD on the transition support mechanism.

Previously, the PSC also held its 1127<sup>th</sup> session that was dedicated to the deployment of 3000 troops in the Sahel Region. In the light of the decision of the Security Council to end the UN Mission in Mali the Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) on the request of the de facto authorities of Mali, this session will serve to consider the requisite measures that should be taken to avoid the emergence of security vacuum and address the impact this may also have on the G5 Sahel operation which benefits from the support of MINUSMA.

On 25 July, the PSC will hold the third session of the month which will be aimed at discussing community responses to the security challenges on the continent. The session, which will be held at ministerial level, will be addressing the theme for the first time. In the light of the increasing militarization

of the civilian population and the resort also of affected communities to self-defence groups and the associated challenges that arise from these developments, this session helps to understand these and related issues in community response to security challenges and explore relevant policy response measures.

The fourth session is scheduled to take place on 31 July to consider the Mid-Year Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on elections in Africa. The report aims to provide an overview of the outcomes of elections in Africa that were held or scheduled for 2023. The Chairperson's report is expected to provide an outlook on the scheduled elections for 2023, as well as recommendations on how to improve electoral processes and outcomes. This session presents an opportunity for the PSC to engage in discussions and deliberations on upcoming elections in Africa. Moreover, given the potential for electoral violence in some countries, this session is also an opportunity for the PSC to explore ways to help member states prevent such violence.

In addition to the activities of the PSC, the programme of work encompasses the meeting of the Committee of Experts (CoE). The CoE is scheduled to convene on 18 July, to deliberate on the Terms of Reference for the PSC's field mission to the Sahel. The field mission is anticipated to take place from 26 – 29 July. The visit is expected to enable the PSC to engage with member states in the region on developments related to the security situation in the wider region as well as political transitions in concerned member states

Furthermore, the CoE will discuss the preparation for the 3rd Annual Consultation meeting between the PSC and RECs/RMs Policy Organs. This item is intended to develop a comprehensive plan for the consultation in order to enhance the coordination and cooperation between the PSC and RECs/RMs. The issue of coordination and policy coherence between the PSC and RECs/RMs has increasingly become a major area of policy

concern particularly since the past few years.

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