

Provisional Program of Work for the Month of July 2020

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Burundi assumes the role of the monthly chairpersonship of the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC) for the month of July. The provisional program of work, involves some six substantive sessions including three focusing on country specific situations.

The first session of the month is expected to take place on 7 July. On this day the PSC is scheduled to receive a briefing on elections in Africa in the context of the COVID19 pandemic. The Department of Political Affairs is scheduled to provide an overall update on current developments in countries that have recently concluded elections, those that are preparing to undertake elections and those that have decided to postpone elections. The meeting is expected to take place through video teleconference (VTC).

This session affords the PSC an important opportunity to provide guidance to member states on how to manage elections in the context of COVID19. This is important in order to ensure that the holding of elections under restricted conditions or postponement of elections due to COVID19 measures would not lead to electoral disputes and instability.

On 10 July the PSC will consider the situation in the Central African Republic. The PSC is expected to assess the implementation of the peace agreement signed last year particularly in relation to the ongoing fighting and COVID19 pandemic and the overall humanitarian situation in the country. This meeting is also expected to be held via VTC.

On 14 July the PSC will receive a briefing on the Ebola Virus Disease outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo in the

context of the COVID19 pandemic and implications for healthcare and humanitarian workers. The PSC is expected to receive update on the new Ebola outbreak declared on 1 June 2020 as well as the compounded effects of COVID19 on the health sector and humanitarian action. The session is expected to take place through VTC.

The consideration and adoption of the provisional program for the month of August is scheduled for 16 July. The draft program is expected to be circulated to all PSC member states through email and members will share their inputs.

On 21 July, the PSC is scheduled to consider the third country specific session. During this session, the PSC will receive an update on the status of implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Crisis in South Sudan. It is to be recalled that the PSC held its last session on South Sudan on 9 April 2020. This session is expected to review developments since the last session. This session is also scheduled to take place through (VTC).

On 24 July, the PSC will have a preparatory meeting on two agenda items. The first one is the annual joint consultative meeting with the UN Security Council (UNSC). Due to the disruptions that COVID19 has caused, it is not anticipated that the two Councils will hold meetings physically. It also does not seem possible that the Committee of Experts would travel to New York for the annual meeting with UNSC political coordinators and negotiating the draft joint communiqué.

The second meeting for the day is the discussion between the PSC and A3 on the preparation of the upcoming presidencies of the A3 in the UNSC. The meeting is expected to take place through VTC.

On 28 July the PSC will receive an update on of operationalization of the African Standby Force in the context of Africa's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The PSC may

also take in consideration the existing guideline on the role of the ASF in Humanitarian action and Natural Disaster Support (HANDS). The session is scheduled to take place through VTC.

The last session of the month is scheduled for 31 July. On this day, the PSC will receive a briefing from the PSC Military Staff Committee on the 'revised concept note on the guidelines for the deployment of 3000 AU troops in the Sahel', which is prepared based on the Strategic Concept Note prepared as a follow up to the decision the AU Assembly adopted during the February 2020 AU summit. It is to be recalled that AU Commissioner for Peace and Security presented a draft Strategic Concept Note to the PSC in April. This meeting is also expected to take place through VTC.