

Provisional Program of Work for the Month of June 2024

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Date | June 2024

In June 2024, the Republic of Uganda becomes Chairperson of the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC). The provisional programme of work (PPoW) for the month envisages six substantive sessions and a field mission to South Sudan. Three of the sessions focus on thematic issues, while the remaining two are specific to conflict situations. Sessions will be held at all three levels with one session each for ministerial and heads of state and government levels and all the others at ambassadorial level. There will be one open session.

The first session of the month, scheduled for 11 June envisaged to be held as part of the commemoration of the PSC@20, will address the future of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and its impact on peace and security in Africa. The last time the PSC convened on a subject matter related to AI was during its [1097th](#) session on Emerging Technologies and New Media: Impact on Democratic Governance, Peace and Security in Africa in August 2022. A key decision that emanated from the session which may feature in the session on AI is the request from the AU Commission to 'undertake a comprehensive study on Emerging Technology and New Media: Impact on Democratic Governance, Peace and Security in Africa, and present policy options available for harnessing the advantages and for effectively addressing the security threats associated with technologies and new media in Africa'. Considering the pace of developments relating to AI, the particular focus of this session on AI and its intersection with peace and security in Africa is timely.

On 12 June, the PSC will hold a session on the Sanctions Sub-Committee (SSC) Inaugural Meeting: Discussion on the working methods of the Sub-Committee. This session comes after the PSC welcomed the revised Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Sub-Committee on Sanctions during the [PSC Retreat](#) in November 2023. During the retreat, the Council requested the sub-committee to commence operations promptly upon adoption of the Terms of Reference (ToR), to efficiently monitor and evaluate the implementation status of the sanctions imposed by the PSC. The PSC during its informal consultation with countries undergoing political transition also identified the sub-committee on sanctions to provide the Council with [monthly briefings](#) on countries beginning in 2024. This is the third subsidiary body of the PSC to become operational. While there is an expectation that the operationalisation of this sub-committee would reinforce the effectiveness of AU's response, particularly concerning unconstitutional changes of government, the contribution of this sub-committee mostly lies in equipping the PSC with a mechanism for regular monitoring of situations in respect of which it adopted suspension rather than in giving teeth to AU sanctions.

On 14 June, the PSC is scheduled to hold a session on Transnational Organized Crime, Peace and Security in Africa. Since the PSC decided to hold the session on Transnational Organized Crime on an annual basis in 2019, the PSC has since then held two annual sessions with a hiatus in 2023. The last session also saw the PSC request the African Union Mechanism for Police Cooperation (AFRPOL) to work in collaboration with the International Criminal Police Organisation (INTERPOL) and the Committee of Intelligence and Security Service of Africa (CISSA) to jointly produce two databases; one on persons, groups and entities involved in Transnational Organized Crimes, including Foreign Terrorist Fighters; and another one for guiding member states and REC/RMs on Transnational Organized Crimes. The PSC also requested AFRPOL and INTERPOL to produce in-depth research on 'regional information papers

in the fight against transnational organised crime'. Given the one-year lapse, the session will provide an opportunity for the PSC to receive an update since the last session of the PSC on this subject in 2022.

The PSC is scheduled to hold the ministerial session on 19 June on the theme 'Refugees, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and Humanitarian Assistance in Africa.' This session is being convened in the context of World Refugee Day which is commemorated annually on 20 June per UN General Assembly Resolution 55/76 of 2001. When the PSC held a similar session in June 2021, the deliberation was informed by briefing and statements from the AU Department of Health, Humanitarian Affairs and Social Development, the UNHCR and the Chairperson of the Permanent Representatives Committee Sub-Committee on Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons. Apart from taking stock of the state of refugees and IDPs in Africa, which can build on the annual report of the AU Commission submitted to the AU Assembly in February 2024, this session is expected to have a particular focus on humanitarian assistance to refugees and IDPs in Africa. In this respect, the session serves to draw attention to not only the dramatic increase in the number of refugees and IDPs during the past few years but also the worsening of the challenges to the provision of humanitarian assistance to refugees and IDPs in Africa.

On 20 June, the PSC will consider the situation in Somalia/ATMIS. This is the fourth engagement of the PSC on ATMIS since the start of the year. In addition to reviewing the situation in Somalia and the state of ATMIS and its drawdown, it is expected that this session will focus on the AU report on the post-ATMIS assessment. Considering the timing of the session, of particular significance for the PSC during this session is to get feedback on the lessons from the previous drawdowns and the state of preparedness for proceeding with the Phase III drawdown that is due during the month. Growing concerns from [neighbouring](#) countries on the

drawdown of ATMIS may also steer the discussion around the third phase of ATMIS. In addition to the drawdown of forces, recent developments have indicated the focus on the need for continuation of support for the Somali Police Force. This is depicted by the two meetings held around the need to further capacitate the police force by both the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) as well as Police Contributing Countries (PCC) on the margins of the PSC session last month.

The Heads of State and Government session of the PSC will convene on 22 June to deliberate on the situation in Sudan. In the [communiqué](#) it adopted during its 1209th session dedicated to Sudan, the PSC tasked the African Union (AU) Commission and the High-Level Panel, among others, to present options for investigating the atrocities committed. In its most recent consideration of the situation in Sudan at its 1213th [session](#), the Council adopted two key measures towards mitigating the situation in Sudan. First, it tasked the AU Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights to investigate the human rights situation in Darfur. Second, it requested the 'AU High-Level Panel to work with the newly-appointed AU Special Envoy for the Prevention of Genocide, to develop proposals on how to address ongoing atrocities and to prevent further escalation in Darfur, as well as to develop a plan for the protection of civilians. Apart from following up on the progress made regarding these decisions, the session is expected to consider the state of the war and its impacts, as well as the status of the various efforts to achieve peace. Of particular interest for this summit-level session would also be an assessment of the AU roadmap for the resolution of the situation in Sudan adopted at the PSC summit-level session that Uganda chaired on 27 May 2023.

For the last week of June, the PSC is expected to undertake a field Mission to South Sudan between 24-26 June and a Consideration of the Field Mission Report on South Sudan on 28 June. This mission comes in the context of various concerns

about the lack of adequate progress in the implementation of relevant transitional tasks that are necessary to create conditions for the holding of elections scheduled for December 2024. The visit allows the PSC to gather first-hand information on the state of preparedness of South Sudan for holding elections as scheduled and on potential risks for disagreement that could derail the relative stability in South Sudan in the context of the elections that require close monitoring and preventive measures.

In addition to the PSC activities, the PSC Committee of Experts will convene a capacity-building retreat on 6-9 June in Johannesburg, South Africa. It is also envisaged that the inaugural launch of the Sanctions Committee postponed from May will be held on 12 June. The Military Staff Committee is envisaged to have a meeting on Peace Support Operations (PSO) and humanitarian action in Africa, engagement with ICRC and WFP on 18 June. As indicated in the footnote, the PPOW also envisages the possibility of the PSC to discuss UNSC Resolution 2719.

****Post Script: A revision of the initial version of the PSC programme of work implemented on 3 June, resulted in two schedule changes, one session removal, and one session addition. The first session, originally planned for 11 June on the topic of Artificial Intelligence and its impact on peace and security in Africa, has been rescheduled to 13 June. The second reschedule involves the Heads of State and Government session on the situation in Sudan, which has been moved to 21 June instead of 22 June. Lastly, the revised work programme eliminated the session on Transnational Organized Crime, Peace, and Security in Africa, originally scheduled for 14 June, and replaced it with a session on UN Security Council Resolution 2719(2023), also scheduled for 14 June.***