

Provisional Program of Work for the Month of May 2024

Provisional Program of Work for the Month of May 2024 *

Date | May 2024

In May 2024, the United Republic of Tanzania will assume the role of chairing the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC). Given that May 2024 marks 20 years since PSC's operationalization, the PSC Secretariat has dedicated May and the following months of the year, to the commemoration of this body with the incorporation of 'PSC@20' for consideration on most of its agenda items. The provisional program of work indicates that each week will be dedicated to a particular thematic issue as part of the marking of the 20th anniversary of the PSC. Accordingly, the first week of May is dedicated to 'mediation and dialogue'; the second to 'humanitarian, peace and security'; the third to 'women and youth, peace and security'; the fourth to 'child protection'; and the fifth to 'peace support operations'.

During the month, PSC is expected to convene five substantive sessions with six agenda items, including a High-level event at the Heads of State and Government level. It will also have an exhibition day, Committee of Experts (CoE) meetings, a field mission to Tigray region in Ethiopia and the induction of the Military Staff Committee (MSC) which will be held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. One of the sessions will be an open session.

On 13 May, the PSC is expected to convene its first substantive session on consideration of the Report of the post-ATMIS Assessment. The last convening of the PSC on ATMIS was the [1205th](#) session on 3 April 2024 on the Briefing by the Federal Republic of Somalia on its Proposal for a Post-ATMIS

Security Arrangement in Somalia, pursuant to UN Security Council Resolution 2710 (2023). It is to be recalled that during this session, PSC requested the AU Commission to undertake a comprehensive and detailed planning based on the situation on the ground, including undertaking threat assessments, in consultation with the Federal Government of Somalia, the ATMIS Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs), and the UN, and report back to it by the end of April 2024. It is against the end of this timeline that the meeting is being convened for receiving this report.

On the same day (13 May), the PSC will also consider and adopt the draft provisional program of work for June 2024.

The second substantive PSC session, scheduled for 15 May, will be an open session on Stocktaking of the Implementation of the Protocol establishing the AU PSC, Article by Article – Practice, Performance and Prospects. The session is expected to take stock of the 20 years journey of the PSC and presents the occasion for identifying opportunities for sustaining achievements and areas for improvement in the functioning of AU's premier standing peace and security decision-making body. The meeting is also expected to provide the platform for assessing how well each article of the PSC Protocol has been put into practice.

On 17 and 18 May, the PSC is expected to undertake a field mission to Tigray Region in Ethiopia. This mission is taken under the spirit of Consolidating Peace in Africa – Pretoria Peace Agreement. The Ethiopia-Tigray peace agreement (Pretoria Agreement or Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA)), signed on 2 November 2022 in Pretoria, South Africa aimed to end the war in Tigray region of Ethiopia by establishing a permanent ceasefire between the government of Ethiopia and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF). During the [1158th](#) PSC session, the PSC requested the AU Commission to undertake a needs assessment for the extension of the deployment of the

Monitoring, Verification and Compliance Mechanism (MVCM) – with consideration on the timelines and funding requirements to avoid its premature withdrawal. During its 37th Ordinary Session held in February 2024, the AU Assembly endorsed the disbursement of 1 Million USD from the Crisis Reserve Fund of the AU Peace Fund to support the DDR program within the Pretoria COHA for the Tigray region. This field mission is therefore expected to give the PSC an update on the situation on the ground, including the humanitarian situation, as well as provide valuable insights that can improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the AU's future mediation and dialogue initiatives.

On 20 May, the PSC will convene its third substantive meeting to receive an updated briefing on countries under political transitions, specifically Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali, Niger and Gabon. This builds on earlier sessions of the PSC on countries in complex political transitions focusing specifically on those countries that experienced unconstitutional changes of government. This session provides an opportunity to review the state of the transitional process in each of these countries, the issues facing the transitional process and the ways in which the AU can enhance its role in facilitating reform processes and the implementation of transitional tasks that pave the way for return to constitutional order. If the experience thus far is anything to go by and the recent ECOWAS decision regarding some of these countries serves as guide, there is a need for the PSC to have a more realistic consideration of the situation of those countries in transition that are experiencing active fighting in conflicts involving terrorist groups in their territories. This is also important in the light of the recently concluded [Inaugural Annual Joint Consultative meeting](#) between the PSC and the Mediation and Security Council (At Ambassadorial Level) of the ECOWAS held in Abuja, Nigeria on 24 April 2024 which underlined the need to support countries in political transition in order to ensure **the resilience of**

state institutions and to prevent their weakening.

The fourth substantive PSC session to be held on 21 May will have two agenda items. The first agenda will be on the Consideration of the Draft Common African Position on the 4th Review Conference of the United Nations (UN) Program of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its Aspects (UNPoA). The 4th Review Conference (RevCon4) of the UN Program of Action (PoA) on small arms and light weapons and the International Tracing Instrument (ITI) is expected to take place from 18 June – 28 June 2024. The conference will provide an opportunity to highlight the progress made in the implementation of the PoA to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects, as well as the review of the ITI. In this context, from 28 to 30 November 2023, the PAPS Department [convened](#) a meeting of AU Member States Experts, including experts on small arms and light weapons control from AU Member States and Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Regional Mechanisms (RMs) and Intergovernmental Regional Bodies (RBs) as well as the Chair of the Peace and Security Cluster of the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC), to develop a Common African Position on the fourth Review Conference of the UNPoA. The coming PSC meeting therefore will offer the opportunity to review and consider the draft Common African Position, prior to the conference in June.

The second agenda item expected to feature on 21 May is the Consideration of the Report of the Field Mission to Tigray Region of Ethiopia that is scheduled during the month.

The fifth PSC meeting will be taking place on 25 May, which marks the annual celebration of Africa Day, the PSC@20 Anniversary Colloquium and will be held at HoSG Level under the theme, “20 Years of the AU PSC as a Standing Decision-Making Organ: The Next 2 Decades of the Peace and Security We

Want in Africa.” The event which will be held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, will also see unveiling of the PSC Logo by the PSC Troika.

The PSC CoE is also expected to convene a meeting on 02 May to Consider the Draft Common African Position on the 4th Review Conference of the UN PoA, in preparation for the substantive PSC meeting scheduled to be held on 21 May. On 06 May, the CoE will convene a meeting in preparation for the PSC 20th Anniversary Colloquium, which will be held on 25 May.

On 27 May, there is expected to be the inaugural meeting of the PSC Sub-Committee on Sanctions. The 16th Extraordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union held in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, in May 2022, called for the full operationalization of the PSC Sub-Committee on Sanctions and directed the PSC CoE to develop the Terms of Reference (ToRs) for the Sub-Committee. It is against the development of the latter that the PSC Sub-Committee will convene its inaugural meeting on this day on the margins of the 20th Anniversary of the PSC.

On 06 May, the PSC also envisages an exhibition day for the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the PSC at the AU Commission. The exhibition will be an opportunity to showcase the PSC’s remarkable journey over the past two decades, its accomplishments and its reinforcement role as a vital organ within the AU.

The last activity of the month will be the induction of the PSC Military Staff Committee (MSC) in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania to be held on 28-31 May. The induction’s purpose is to familiarize members of the MSC of newly elected PSC member states, with the operational procedures of the PSC and to strengthen the MSC’s assistance to the PSC, as outlined in Article 13 of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of

the PSC.

PSC's provisional program of work for the month also envisages in footnote, the commemoration of the International Day of Living Together in Peace on 16 May.

**Post-script: The first revision of programme of work of the PSC effected on 3 May introduced three major changes. First, the session on consideration of the Report on the Post-ATMIS Assessment which was scheduled for 13 May has been removed from the programme and is put under footnote. The PSC may thus reinstate the session after the completion of the preparations for the meeting and the finalization of the Report. Second, the field mission to Tigray region which was scheduled to be on 17-18 May has been postponed. As a result, the PSC will not hold the meeting on the consideration of the Report of the field mission to Tigray region planned for 21 May. Finally, the inaugural meeting of the PSC sub-committee on sanctions which was slated to happen on 27 May has also been postponed.*

Amani Africa wishes to express its gratitude to the Australian Embassy in Ethiopia for the support in the production of this Insight on the Monthly Programme of Work of the AU Peace and Security Council