

Provisional Programme of Work for the Month of April 2023

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Date | April 2023

In April, Tunisia takes over the role of chairing the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC). As envisaged in PSC's provisional programme of work, five substantive sessions are expected to take place during the month. One of these will be held at ministerial level while the remaining four sessions will be convened at ambassadorial level. Two of the sessions planned for the month will be committed to country/region specific situations whereas the remaining three will address various thematic issues, all of which are already on the agenda of the PSC. Apart from the five substantive sessions, the programme of work also envisages the convening of the 15th annual retreat of the PSC on its working methods.

The first session of the month scheduled to take place on 03 April will be a commemoration of 'international day for mine awareness and assistance in mine action' which is noted annually on the 4th of April, in line with the declaration of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly's resolution adopted on 08 December 2005 [[A/RES/60/97](#)]. On its part, the PSC has convened multiple sessions over the years to deliberate on concerns surrounding mine action in Africa. A specific concern that may receive attention at the upcoming session and was also highlighted at PSC's previous meeting on the theme – the 1072nd session – is the increasing use of anti-personnel landmines, including Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) by non-state armed groups and terrorist organisations.

The second session is planned to be held on 06 April which

will be an open session committed to the PSC's annual meeting on 'prevention of the ideology of hate, genocide and hate crimes in Africa'. In line with PSC's 678th meeting which decided to dedicate an open session to the theme every year in April, 'prevention of the ideology of hate, genocide and hate crimes' has become a standing agenda item of the PSC. Further to reflecting on the importance of early warning and timely response to avert the risk of hate crimes and genocide, this upcoming session also serves to reflect on the increasing significance of the lessons learned from the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda and the need for vigilance in the face of conflicts involving mass atrocities and propagation of denialism and incitement of hate and violence.

On 13 April, the PSC will convene its third substantive session of the month. The session will be committed to PSC's regular engagement on cyber security. It is to be recalled that at its 850th session on the theme, the PSC decided to dedicate an annual meeting on cyber security, although this decision hasn't been regularly implemented. The last time PSC deliberated on issues related to cyber security was at its 1097th session convened under the theme 'Emerging Technologies and New Media: Impact on Democratic Governance, Peace and Security in Africa'. As emphasised at the 1097th session, there is increasing risk of malicious use of emerging technologies and new media space. The absence of prioritisation of cybersecurity among African countries and organisations is also reportedly making the continent an attractive target for cybercriminals. The session is expected to draw attention of member states and other relevant stakeholders toward the importance of taking necessary measures to enhance cyber security.

The fourth session of the month is scheduled to take place on 18 April. Committed to the situation in Libya, the session is expected to be held at ministerial level. The last time the

PSC discussed the situation in Libya was in February, at its 1136th meeting. One of the critical issues addressed at the 1136th session and expected to be of central focus at the upcoming session is the status of Libya's national reconciliation process. Following the preparatory meeting held in Tripoli on 08 January 2023, the National Reconciliation Conference is expected to take place in May 2023. Further to following up on on-going efforts towards convening the reconciliation conference, this session serves the PSC to decide on a solid timeframe for undertaking its planned field mission to Libya, in line with the decision of its 1136th session and ahead of the commencement of the National Reconciliation Conference.

The last substantive session of the month is set to take place on 20 April and will be a briefing on the situation in the Sahel. The situation in the Sahel was last discussed by the PSC at its 1116th session. Further to expressing concern over the continuing spread of terrorism in the region and the threat posed to security and stability due to unconstitutional changes of governments and resulting complex political transitions witnessed in countries in the region, the PSC may follow up on the commitment it made at the 1116th meeting to 'revisit the possible deployment of 3000 troops for six months in order to further degrade terrorist groups in the Sahel, as directed by the AU Assembly Decision [[Assembly/AU/Dec.792\(XXXIII\)](#)]'.

In addition to the substantive sessions of the PSC, the PSC Committee of Experts (CoE) is also expected to meet on 21 April in preparation for the 15th annual retreat on the working methods of the PSC. The PSC Military Staff Committee (MSC) is scheduled to convene on 25 April to have a focused discussion on strategic airlift. This has become a critical issue as the AU struggles to get additional African countries able to

provide airlift capacity for delivering the remaining supplies in the Continental Logistics Depot in Duala, Cameroon to the Southern Africa Development Community Mission to Mozambique (SAMIM).

PSC's 15th annual retreat on its working methods is planned to take place from 27 to 29 April, in Tunis, Tunisia. In addition to reflecting on new areas to advance the working methods of the PSC, the retreat could serve to assess and follow up on the implementation of the conclusions of its 14th annual retreat.

The provisional programme of work for the month also envisages in footnote an informal consultation of the PSC with countries in political transition (Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali and Sudan), to take place on 11 April.