

Provisional Programme of Work for the Month of June 2023

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Date | June 2023

Zimbabwe will be chairing the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC) for the month of June 2023. The PSC's Provisional Programme of Work includes six substantive sessions. Two of the sessions will address country/region-specific issues, while the remaining four will cover thematic topics. All sessions except one, which will be held at the ministerial level, are scheduled to be held at ambassadorial level.

On 13 June, the first session of the month is scheduled to provide the PSC with an update on the current situation in Central Africa Republic (CAR). During PSC's 1093rd session, major decisions were made regarding the drawdown and closure of the AU Military Observer Mission to the Central African Republic (MOUACA). The upcoming session on the 13th could serve to follow up on the status of implementation of the peace agreement, including developments regarding integration of MOUACA's mandate into the AU Mission in CAR and the capacity of the AU Mission in CAR to follow up on those tasks. In addition, it is anticipated that the PSC will receive a briefing on the necessary arrangements for CAR's local and regional election, which is planned for July 2023.

On the same day – 13 June – the PSC will also consider and adopt the programme of work for the month of July.

The second item on the agenda for the month is an update on the situation in the Horn of Africa, planned to take place on 15 June. It is expected that the central focus of the session

will be the situation in Sudan and the regional impact of the conflict. Since the outbreak of the conflict, the PSC convened four sessions on Sudan including the recent session at the level of Heads of States and Government. It is therefore expected that the PSC will follow up on the decisions made during its previous sessions and specifically consider the regional implications of the conflict.

On 20 June, for its third session and the first thematic topic of the month, the PSC is set to conduct a review to evaluate the progress made towards achieving one of AU's flagship projects, Silencing the Guns in Africa. This review is in line with the Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanism of the AU Master Roadmap of Practical Steps to Silence the Guns in Africa by 2030. The Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanism for the AU Master Roadmap was adopted in Nairobi in May 2021, in line with the decision of the 14th Extra-Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly [[Ext/Assembly/AU/Dec.1\(XIV\)](#)], and endorsed by the Assembly in February 2022. It is expected that the PSC will receive a briefing from the newly appointed AU High Representative for Silencing the Guns, Mohammed Ibn Chambas. It is expected that the PSC will hear from Chambas on his plans on how best to pursue the agenda of silencing the guns. This is particularly pressing considering the setback that Africa continues to face in the effort for preventing and resolving conflicts in recent years. Furthermore, the upcoming session is expected to review the efforts made by member states, Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs), and relevant stakeholders towards silencing the guns in Africa using the existing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms outlined in the roadmap.

The fourth session of the month scheduled to take place on 22 June will be held at ministerial level. The session will focus on the progress made in implementing the Common African Defence and Security Policy, along with other relevant Instruments on Defence and Security on the Continent. The

session will primarily update the PSC on developments regarding the full operationalisation of the Africa Standby Force (ASF) since PSC's last briefing on the topic, at its 1069th session. This session is expected to give particular focus on steps taken by the various RECs in operationalising the ASF. Coming after the recent conclusion of the 15th Ordinary Session of the Specialized Technical Committee on Defence, Safety and Security (STCDSS), the upcoming session is also expected to provide updates regarding the status of the draft 2021-2025 strategic work plan for the enhancement of ASF and the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the AU and RECs/RMs on the Deployment and Employment of ASF, issues that were tabled for discussion at the 15th Ordinary Session of the STCDSS. The PSC may also receive updates on force/capability generation and rapid recruitment and deployment processes, as well as the status of the Continental Logistics Base (CLB) and the Regional Logistics Depots (RLD).

On 27 June, the fifth substantive session will be committed to a briefing on the continental early warning and security outlook (CEWS). This session will be held in line with the decision of PSC's 360th session of March 2013 to review the state of peace and security on the continent through horizon scanning, biannually. At the 1138th session which was the last time the PSC received a briefing on CEWS, it also underscored the need for regular briefing on the topic. During the coming session, it is expected that the PSC will be briefed by the Committee of Intelligence Services of Africa (CISSA), the African Union Mechanism for Police Cooperation (AFRIPOL) and African Center for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT). It should also be noted that at its 1073rd session, the PSC emphasized the need for Member States and RECs/RMs to address the persistent denial of credible early warning reports of potential crisis and conflict situations on the continent. To address this issue, the PSC, among other key

asks, requested the Commission to elaborate a trigger mechanism and indicators to facilitate the role of the PSC in responding to early warning information on potential conflict or crisis situations, and urgently submit both for its consideration. Apart from follow up on these decisions, this session may also serve as an opportunity for reviewing developments relating to the last briefing on the security outlook of the continent and since that briefing.

The last session of the month, scheduled for 29 June, will be dedicated to the annual consultative meeting with the Pan-African Parliament (PAP). The consultative meeting is in line with Article 18 of the PSC Protocol which envisages maintaining close working relations between the PSC and the PAP in furtherance of peace, security and stability in Africa and emphasizes the importance of cooperation between the two bodies.

In addition to the activities of the PSC, the program of work also lists activities of the PSC subsidiary bodies, namely Military Staff Committee (MSC) and the Committee of Experts (CoE). In addition to the sessions of the PSC, the MSC will undertake a technical field mission to Somalia from 5 to 7 June. On 19 June, the report of the MSC's technical field mission to Somali will be considered. It is anticipated that the report will include major implementation component as well as challenges of the ATMIS mandate to implement the Somali Transition Plan (STP), detailing the handover of security responsibilities from ATMIS to the Federal Government of Somalia by December, 2024. Particularly, the report is expected to provide key findings on the preparations for the drawdown of 2000 soldiers by 30 June 2023.

On 16 June, the PSC CoE will convene a briefing session on the outcomes of three key items discussed during its retreat held from 18 – 22 May 2023. As such, the briefing will cover status of finalization of the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the Sanctions Committee and finalization of ToR for the AU

Ministerial Committee on Counter-Terrorism, both to be established in line with the decision of the May 2022 Malabo Declaration on Terrorism and Unconstitutional Changes of Government (UCG). Moreover, the CoE will reflect on the working methods and modalities for the engagement between the PSC and the African three-members of the UN Security Council (A3).