

# Provisional Programme of Work for the Month of May 2023

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Date | May 2023

Uganda will be chairing the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC) in May. The provisional programme of work for the month envisages five thematic and two country specific sessions as well as the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Informal Retreat and 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Consultative Meeting of the AU PSC and the European Union (EU) Political and Security Committee (EUPSC). In addition to substantive sessions, a field mission to Sudan and Abyei is also envisaged in the program of work, to be conducted if conditions improve and allow such visit.

On 02 May and 03 May consecutively, the PSC will have its 6<sup>th</sup> annual informal retreat and 14<sup>th</sup> annual consultative meeting, respectively, with the EUPSC. In accordance with the annual rotation of the venue of the consultative meeting between Addis Abeba and Brussels, this year's annual retreat and consultative meeting will be taking place in Brussels, Belgium. As is the norm, the informal retreat is expected to serve as a platform for the two counterparts to discuss thematic issues relevant to the EU-AU partnership and the full realisation of the MoU between the two for advancing joint strategies in addressing conflicts and crises through an integrated approach. The state of multilateralism is expected to take centre stage. This year's consultative meeting is set to focus on situations in three regions in Africa: the Great Lakes, the Horn and Sahel. The ongoing conflict in the DRC, the fight against the Al-Shabaab insurgency in Somalia and complex political transitions as well as the fight against terrorism in countries in the Sahel region are expected to

feature as the main agenda items.

On 10 May, the PSC will consider and adopt the provisional programme of work for the month of June 2023.

The next substantive meeting of the PSC is set to take place on 11 May. The session is expected to present a briefing by the Panel of the Wise on its mission to Chad, conducted in line with the request of the PSC's Press Statement of its 1121<sup>st</sup> session held on 11 November 2022. Delayed by over a month from the required timeline, the coming briefing is expected to highlight the Panel's findings with respect to the outcomes of Chad's national dialogue, particularly the two contested issues of in/eligibility of the members of the Military Council to run for elections and the duration of the transition.

The following day, on 12 May, the PSC will have its third session of the month which will be a virtual ministerial meeting committed to a discussion on financing of AU Peace Support Operations (PSOs). Taking place two weeks after the anticipated release of the UN Secretary General's April 2023 Report on progress attained by UN and AU towards realising commitments made in [Resolution 2320\(2016\)](#) on UN's cooperation with regional organisations and [Resolution 2378\(2017\)](#) on peacekeeping reform, PSC's ministerial session provides members the opportunity to reflect on the findings of the report and how to build on and take forward the AU's consensus paper on financing peace and security activities in Africa, adopted by the 36<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly [[Assembly/AU/Dec.842\(XXXVI\)](#)].

On 16 May, the PSC will convene its fourth session taking the form of a briefing on the activities of the African First Ladies Peace Mission (AFLPM). The AFLPM is an initiative that emerged as an outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women, which served as an opportunity for African wives of Heads of

States to come together as ambassadors of peace. As little is known about what the AFLPM has in concrete terms contributed to any peace process thus far, the session serves as an opportunity for discussing the state of operationalization of the mechanism and the ways for harnessing its potentials including most notably around lending much needed additional leverage for advancing the Children Affected by Conflict and Women, Peace and Security agenda.

The fifth session of the month is scheduled for 17 May. This will be an open session committed to the PSC's annual meeting on humanitarian action in Africa. It was in line with its 469<sup>th</sup> meeting that the PSC decided to dedicate an annual meeting to assess humanitarian situations in the continent. Within this framework, the coming session is expected to have a focused discussion on the growing concern over food insecurity and the resultant humanitarian crisis in Africa and reflect on opportunities to boost Africa's food production, in order to address the continent's food crisis in a more sustainable manner.

From 18 to 22 May, the PSC Committee of Experts (CoE) will be conducting a retreat to discuss around three major issues: first, finalisation of the ToR of the Sanctions Committee to be established in line with the May 2022 Malabo Declaration on Terrorism and Unconstitutional Changes of Government (UCG); second, finalisation of ToR for the Ministerial Committee on Counter Terrorism, also to be established in line with the decision of the May 2022 Malabo Declaration on Terrorism and UCG; and finally third, codification of working methods/modalities for engagement between the PSC and the African three member of the UN Security Council (A3).

The sixth session is set to take place on 23 May and will be committed to a briefing on the outcomes of the Heads of State meeting of Troop Contribution Countries (TCCs) to the AU Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS). The Heads of State

Summit took place on 27 April, in Kampala, Uganda, as part of a four-day meeting of ATMIS TCCs which mainly aimed to evaluate the achievements made in the implementation of ATMIS's mandate and to review the ATMIS drawdown plan in compliance with UN Security Council Resolutions [2670\(2022\)](#) and [2628\(2022\)](#) as well as the Communiqué of PSC's 1068<sup>th</sup> session ([PSC/PR/COMM.1068\(2022\)](#)). Among other key points, the briefing could provide updates regarding concrete plans around facilitating drawdown of troops for phase one, which was postponed from December 2022 to June 2023, as well as the coming additional three phases of drawdown.

From 24 to 26 May, a field mission to Sudan and Abyei is envisaged in the provisional program of work. With the latest worrying developments unfolding in Sudan, the conduct of the field mission highly depends on whether the security situation on the ground will allow the PSC to travel to the area.

On 29 May, the PSC will convene its seventh session which will be committed to a review of the AU Country Structural Vulnerability and Resilience Assessment (CSVRA). In March 2023, it is to be recalled that the PSC was scheduled to consider the status report on the implementation of the Continental Structural Conflict Prevention Framework (CSCPF), including the CSVRA and Country Structural Vulnerability Mitigation Strategies (CSVMS). This session could not take place in March as per the plan and was postponed to coming months. In that context, the coming meeting sets the stage to reflect on structural issues and challenges which trigger conflicts and instability in the continent and to provide some highlights on how best to identify member states' vulnerabilities to conflict at an early stage in order to enable timely intervention and response.

On 30 May, the PSC Military Staff Committee (MSC) will conduct a meeting to consider the current support models for the AU PSOs. The meeting aims to reflect on lessons learnt and the

way forward for AU PSOs in this respect.

The last PSC session envisaged in the programme of work for May is consideration of the report of the PSC Field Mission to Sudan and Abyei.

The programme of work also envisages in footnote, a press release to be issued by the Chair of the PSC on 16 May, in commemoration of the International Day of Living Together in Peace. It is to be recalled that at its 891<sup>st</sup> meeting held in November 2019, the PSC decided to dedicate an annual open session to this theme. Although a few sessions have been committed by the PSC to commemorate the International Day of Living Together in Peace in the years that followed, this hasn't been done regularly.