Provisional Programme of Work for the Month of November 2022

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Date | November 2022

In November, Namibia will assume the role of chairing the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC). The month's programme of work envisages six sessions with eight substantive agenda items, out of which four will focus on country/region specific situations while the remaining four will address various thematic issues. One of the sessions taking place in November will be convened at ministerial level while the remaining sessions will be held at ambassadorial level. During the month, Council is also expected to undertake two retreats – the PSC's annual joint retreat with the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) and the annual PSC retreat on its working methods.

The first session of the month is scheduled to take place on 2 November with two agenda items. The first agenda item will be an update briefing on the situation in Sudan. The last time Council addressed the situation in Sudan was at its 1076th session which assessed developments in countries undergoing political transitions including Sudan. Sudan's political crisis which unfolded following the 25 October 2021 coup largely remains unresolved having serious security and humanitarian implications on the nation. Despite efforts initiated by the Trilateral Mechanism [consisting of the AU, United Nations (UN) and Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)] to enable negotiations between the military and civilian leadership, concreate agreement is yet to be achieved. On 04 July, the military component announced

that it will no longer take part in the negotiations facilitated by the Trilateral Mechanism suggesting instead that this mechanism focuses on facilitating a dialogue among the various civilian components. The coming session is expected to take stock of such key developments that have characterised the situation in Sudan since Council's previous session.

The second agenda item Council is expected to address on 2 November is a presentation of key messages on the nexus between peace and security and climate change, in preparation for COP 27 [27th Conference of the Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)] which is scheduled to take place from 06 to 18 November 2022, in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt. Climate change and security is one of PSC's standing thematic issues regularly addressed since its 585th session where it decided to hold annual sessions dedicated to this theme. The outcomes of these deliberations are expected to inform the key messages to be presented at the upcoming meeting, including the impact of climate-related displacement in driving up local tensions and setting the stage for the eruption of violent intercommunal conflicts, a point well emphasised at Council's 1079th meeting. It is also to be recalled that on 18 October Council convened a ministerial session on climate change, peace and security nexus with a focus on the need to build resilience and adaptation for African island States.

The next day, 3 November, Council is set to convene its second session of the month which will be an open meeting dedicated to the theme of Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) in Africa. This will be the third time Council will be addressing YPS in 2022, demonstrating the growing attention it's receiving and the importance attached to Africa's youth in contributing to efforts aimed at maintaining peace and security in the continent. Following up from its 1080th session which formed

Council's previous meeting on the theme, the coming session may serve to highlight progress obtained among AU member States in domesticating the AU Continental Framework on YPS, particularly through the development of National Action Plans (NAPs).

On 04 November, the PSC Committee of Experts (CoE) will meet to prepare for the Annual High-Level Seminar on the Peace and Security in Africa. The High-Level Seminar on Peace and Security in Africa is a yearly forum which has been convened since 2013, with the main purpose of enhancing cooperation between the PSC and the African members of the UN Security Council (A3 States) in advancing Africa's voice within the UN Security Council. It is to be recalled that the previous Seminar took place in Oran, Algeria, from 02 to 04 December 2021.

The third session of the month is planned to take place on 07 November and will be a ministerial meeting on the situation in Mozambique and Operations of Southern African Development Community (SADC) Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM). Since Council's previous session on Mozambique which took place in January 2022 – 1062nd session – the security situation in the country's northern province of Cabo Delgado has continued to deteriorate worsening the humanitarian toll. While it has continued its efforts to neutralise terrorist threats in the region, SAMIM has also been experiencing logistical and financial challenges which could impede on its effective response if not well addressed. In addition to receiving updates on these and other key aspects, Council is expected to endorse the Communique of the 42nd Ordinary Summit of SADC Heads of State and Government which extended SAMIM's mandate.

The fourth session of the month will be an engagement between the PSC and the AU Commission on International Law (AUCIL), scheduled for 09 November. This will be the first time the PSC commits a session to an engagement with the AUCIL, which is an

advisory organ of the AU established on the basis of Article 5(2) of the AU Constitutive Act. As provided in the Statutes of the AUCIL, the main objectives of the organ revolve around codification and progressive development of international law in Africa including through revision of existing treaties and conducting studies on legal matters of interest to the AU and its member States. The planned engagement between the two AU organs could serve to discuss challenges and opportunities for advancing international law norms relevant for the maintenance of peace and security in the continent.

On 11 November, Council will consider and adopt the draft provisional programme of work for the month of December 2022.

From 14 to 15 November, the Annual Joint-Retreat of the PSC and APRM will be held in Durban, South Africa. The Joint-Retreat of the PSC and APRM was held for the first time in December 2021 based on the decision of PSC's 914th session for the AU Commission to work with the APRM Secretariat to organise a joint-retreat of the two organs. This year's joint-retreat will be held in line with the decision of the inaugural retreat to have the convening on a yearly basis. The coming joint-retreat may address the increasing governance related instabilities in the continent and the value of investing on preventive tools to avert governance issues from becoming security concerns.

The next PSC activity during the month will be the Annual PSC Retreat on its Working Methods. The PSC Retreat is expected to take place in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, from 17 to 19 November. This year's retreat will constitute Council's 14th retreat.

On 28 November, Council will convene its fifth session which is expected to address two agenda items. The first one of these will be a briefing on the deployment of the 3000 troops to the Sahel region. Despite the decision of the AU Assembly

in 2020 to deploy 3000 troops to the Sahel region [Assembly/AU/Dec.792(XXXIII)] and PSC's endorsement of the "Revised Strategic Concept Note on Planning Guidance for the Deployment of 3000 Troops to the Sahel" at its 950th session, the deployment of the troops remains pending. Having regard to the situation on the ground, particularly the withdrawal of operation Barkhane from Mali and the potential security vacuum that could result, Council may take note of the important role the 3000 troops could play in managing the security situation in the region and urge all relevant stakeholders to exert efforts towards realising their deployment.

The second agenda item which forms part of Council's 28 November session is a briefing on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) efforts in Africa and an engagement with the UN Peacebuilding Commission (UNPBC). It is to be recalled that at its 1047th session where Council last addressed PCRD in Africa, it launched the AU PCRD Awareness Week from 7 to 14 November 2021 and decided it shall be regularly commemorated during November each year. On 11 November 2021 on the side-lines of the AU PCRD Awareness Week, the PSC also held its regular meeting with the UNPBC.

One of the key decisions of the 1047th session was to ensure "urgent review of the AU PCRD Policy Framework in order to ensure that it is re-aligned and adaptable to the emerging challenges in the Continental peace and security landscape".

In line with the decision of the 35th Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly [Assembly/AU/Dec. 815(XXXV)], a High-Level Expert Engagement was facilitated by the AU Commission from 09 to 14 September 2022, to review the AU Policy Framework on PCRD. The engagement which took place in Accra, Ghana served to conduct a comprehensive review of the architecture, mechanisms and processes of AU PCRD. At the coming briefing, the PSC may welcome the High-Level Expert Engagement and hear about some of the key aspects of the review and emerging recommendations.

The last session of the month is scheduled to take place on 30 November. The session will be committed to a briefing on the situation in South Sudan. Since Council's 1092nd session which was the last time it addressed the situation in South Sudan, some key developments have unfolded in the country's political transition process, a critical one being the extension of the transitional period by 24 months with effect from 23 February 2023 to 22 February 2025, through consensus reached among parties to the Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS). The decision to extend the transition period was reached in light of the lagged implementation of the R-ARCSS, with some of the agreement's essential elements still outstanding, including completion of the permanent constitution-making process. The coming session will serve for Council to reflect on this and other developments in the implementation of the peace agreement.

In addition, Council's provisional programme of work for the month also envisages in footnote, the convening of a Lesson Learnt Forum on AU Peace Support Operation (PSOs) to take place in Abuja, Nigeria, from 01 to 03 November. The footnotes also envisage a Summit on Industrialization with the participation of the Executive Council, from 23 to 25 November.