

# Provisional programme of work for the month of October 2023

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Date | October 2023

For the month of October, the Republic of Congo takes over the role of chairing the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC). The PSC's provisional programme of work of the month, prepared under the guidance of the incoming chairperson includes four substantive sessions as well as the annual consultative meeting of the PSC with the United Nations (UN) Security Council (UNSC). Three sessions will be addressing various thematic issues, one session will have country-specific focus. The PSC is also expected to conduct a field mission to Libya within the month.

At the start of the month, on 3 and 4 October, the PSC Committee of Experts (CoE) and the UNSC Working Group will meet to prepare for the 8<sup>th</sup> joint informal seminar and 17<sup>th</sup> joint annual consultative meeting between the PSC and the UNSC. The CoE and Working group meeting will take place at the Julius Nyerere Peace and Security Building inside the African Union. While the CoE travelled to New York several times for such preparatory meeting, it is the first time that the UN Security Council Working Group to Addis Ababa.

On 5 October, the PSC will convene its 8<sup>th</sup> joint informal seminar with the UNSC. This 8<sup>th</sup> edition of the informal seminar is scheduled to focus on discussion on financing of AU PSOs and working methods in UNSC-PSC relationship. This seminar will immediately be succeeded on 6 October by the 17<sup>th</sup> joint annual consultative meeting between the PSC and UNSC. The agenda for this joint consultative meeting covers country/region specific

situations namely Sudan, Sahel, Somalia and ATMIS and the situation in Eastern DRC.

On 10 October for its first substantive session, the PSC will receive a briefing by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) on its activities and the humanitarian situation in Africa. Since 2007, the ICRC has made regular briefings to the PSC, and ICRC's president Mirjana Spoljaric Egger is expected to present the briefing this year, to reflect on pertinent humanitarian concerns in Africa. Among other key points, the briefing could provide an opportunity to discuss persisting and emerging trends in the humanitarian situation and in the provision of humanitarian assistance in the continent.

For its second substantive and only country-specific session of the month, on 17 October, the PSC will receive updates on the two recent situations of military coup in Africa: Niger and Gabon. Since the coup in Niger on 26 July, this will be the third time the PSC will be discussing the situation. During its previous session on 14 August, the PSC had decided to suspend Niger from all activities of the AU, and its organs and institutions until effective restoration of constitutional order.

Following the coup in Gabon on 30 August, the PSC held an emergency session on the situation on 31 August where it condemned the coup and immediately suspended Gabon from all activities of the AU and its organs and institutions until the restoration of constitutional order and demanded such restoration to be through the conduct of a free, fair, credible, and transparent election observed by the AU Election Observer Mission and the concerned region. This session will allow the PSC to scrutinize the implementation and effectiveness of the outcomes of its previous sessions to ensure restoration of constitutional order in both Niger and Gabon.

As its third substantive session on 19 August, the PSC will discuss on the AU Sanctions regime. The PSC is expected to deliberate on the effectiveness and enforceability of the AU Sanctions regime. During its 1100<sup>th</sup> session held on 15 August 2022, the PSC had deliberated on sanctions and enforcement, particularly as a deterrence against unconstitutional changes of government (UCGs). The PSC is expected to receive update on the development of the sanctions mechanism and the related progress towards the operationalization of the PSC Sub-Committee on Sanctions.

From 23 to 26 October, the PSC will undertake a field mission to Libya, to express AU Solidarity with the Libyan people and to gather first-hand information on the situation on the ground with a view to adopt more informed decisions on the next steps in favor of Libya. This field mission is a follow up on the PSC's decision of its 1136<sup>th</sup> meeting. In addition to armed conflicts, Libya is grappling with the devastating impact of the deadliest Mediterranean tropical-like cyclone in recorded history, Storm/Cyclone Daniel, that hit Libya, Greece, Bulgaria, Turkey, Egypt, and Israel at the beginning of September 2023. The impact of the cyclone hit Libya the hardest with the World Health Organization (WHO) recording over 4000 deaths and over 8500 people missing, and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimating over 43,000 people displaced in Libya, while Greece, Turkey and Bulgaria had 17, 7 and 4 fatalities respectively. The significantly devastating impact of the cyclone in Libya was due to the country's vulnerabilities owing to weakened critical infrastructure involving dams in Derna due to lack of maintenance and neglect made possible by years' long conflict that has plagued the country. This field mission to Libya would present an opportunity for the PSC to assess the transitional process in Libya and engage the various stakeholders on the reconciliation conference for which the AU took responsibility to organize.

For its fourth and final substantive session for the month of October, the PSC will consider the report of the Chairperson of the Commission on Counterterrorism. At its 957<sup>th</sup> session held on 20 October 2020, the PSC had decided to dedicate an annual session to assess the progress in the Continental efforts in combating the scourge of terrorism, radicalization, and violent extremism, as well as foreign terrorist fighters. The last time the Chairperson of the Commission presented a report to the PSC on Counterterrorism efforts was on 22 October 2021, at the 1040<sup>th</sup> ministerial level session of the PSC.

As indicated in the footnotes of the programme of work for October, during the month, the PSC will also be considering the provisional programme of work for November 2023 via email. The footnotes also envisage an informal consultation to be held on 13 October, between PSC member states and the Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS).

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