

Provisional Programme of Work of the PSC for the Month of March 2021

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Kenya will be chairing the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC) during the month of March. PSC's Provisional Programme of Work (PoW) for the month, considered via email exchange, shows that Council is scheduled to consider one country specific situation and four thematic agenda items. All sessions will be conducted virtually. Two sessions will be held at a ministerial level and one at the level of Heads of State and Government. The PoW also envisages that the PSC will conduct a field visit to South Sudan, from 28 to 30 March and another field visit to Sudan from 30 March to 1 April.

The first session of the month is scheduled to take place on 4 March. This session will be addressing the role of the African three elected members (A3) of in the UN Security Council (UNSC). The last PSC session dedicated to this theme was its 595th meeting which took place in 2016. At that session, Council mainly focused on emphasising the responsibility of A3 States to ensure that PSC's positions are well reflected in the decision making of UNSC regarding all peace and security concerns related to Africa. To that end, the PSC made a call for African States who assume A3 position to regularly brief the AU Commission on their efforts to promote PSC articulated African common positions at the UNSC. It is worth noting that the PSC holds its high-level seminars focusing on the A3 on an annual basis and the last one took place in Libreville, Gabon in January 2020.

The second session of the month is scheduled to take place on

9 March. This session will be held at the level of Heads of State and Government and will be committed to a discussion on sustainable peace in Africa. The session agenda has two segments. The first focuses on climate change and its impact on peace and security in the continent. The second segment is to follow up on paragraph 15 of the decision on Silencing the Guns of 14th Extraordinary summit held at the level of Heads of State and Government (Ext/Assembly/AU/Dec.1(XIV)), which calls on the PSC to engage the Kingdom of Morocco and Sahrawi Republic to address the escalating military tension.

On 12 March, the PSC will consider and adopt its programme of work for the month of April, which will be circulated via email to all members of Council for comments and feedback.

On 16 March, PSC will convene its country specific session of the month which will be addressing the situation in Sudan. It is to be recalled that at its 952nd meeting, PSC highlighted, among others, the expected establishment of the Transitional Legislative Assembly on 3 December 2020. Its upcoming session presents Council the opportunity to follow up on this and other developments. In addition, Council may also welcome and reflect on the recent cabinet reshuffle by Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok, adhering to the terms of the 3 October 2020 Peace Agreement signed between the transitional government and some rebel groups. In addition to considering updates on the situation in Sudan, it is envisaged that the session will also serve as a preparation for Council's upcoming field visit.

The next session scheduled to take place on 18 March aims to address the "emerging challenges and critical lessons for sustainable peacekeeping operations". This session is envisaged to take place at the level of ministers. Major concerns such as the lack of sustainable and predictable financing of peace and security initiatives in the continent, and recent developments in peace support operations in Africa including the end of UNAMID and the developments relating to AMISOM and MNJTF could be addressed at the meeting.

On 22 March, the PSC is scheduled to convene its second ministerial level meeting on the theme “women, peace and sustainable development in Africa”. While the theme ‘women, peace and security’ (WPS) is a standing agenda item of the PSC, the focus on sustainable development will be a new addition. The session is expected to receive report from the AU Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security. As can be recalled, WPS was first introduced as a standing agenda item of the PSC in March of 2010, making the upcoming session coincide with the 11th year of Council’s deliberation on the topic.

As mentioned above, Council’s last activity of the month will be its field visit to South Sudan, planned to take place 28 to 30 March and another field visit to Sudan, scheduled for 30 March to 1 April.