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

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In November, Egypt will be the Chairperson of the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC). The PSC's provisional programme of work for the month envisages four sessions dedicated to thematic issues, one country specific session and a joint consultative meeting with the United Nations (UN) Peacebuilding Commission (UNPBC). As a conclusion to Council's activities of the month, a press conference by the PSC Chairperson is scheduled to take place on 30 November.

The first activity the PSC will be undertaking during the month is the meeting between the PSC Chair and the African three elected members of UN Security Council (UNSC) and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (A3+1), scheduled to take place on 1 November. It is to be recalled that at its 983rd session on the unified role of the A3, Council made some concrete decisions aimed at improving the role played by the A3 in advancing common African positions on African peace and security issues which are on the agenda of the UNSC. One of the key decisions emerging from that session was to have monthly consultations between the PSC Troika and the A3, in order to ensure provision of timely updates and guidance to the A3 on African peace and security issues ahead of UNSC meetings. At the 13th PSC Retreat which took place in May 2021 in Mombasa, it was further reiterated that the incoming Chair of the PSC shall convene monthly meetings with the Coordinator of the A3 and that these meetings shall be reinforced with quarterly meetings at the level of the PSC Troika and the A3 as whole. The upcoming meeting therefore takes place within the framework of these decisions and could also contribute to

preparations being made for the upcoming joint consultative meeting of the PSC and UNSC.

The PSC Committee of Experts (CoE) will be convening on November 2 to prepare for the planned filed mission to Somalia as well as for engagement with UNSC experts at the upcoming annual joint consultative meeting between the PSC and UNSC.

On 5 November, Council will convene its first substantive session, which will focus on the protection of medical personnel and facilities in armed conflicts. The session is likely initiated in response to the growing trend of attacks against medical personnel and facilities observed in conflict affected areas globally, most of these being concentrated in west and central Africa. Reports signify that in the period from 2016 to 2021, over 1000 reported cases of attacks against health workers and medical facilities have been recorded in west and central Africa. Particularly, in Central African Republic (CAR), Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Nigeria, a concerning surge in such attacks has resulted in suspension of medical activities, constraining peoples' access to healthcare, an issue compounded further by outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The PSC is scheduled to undertake a field mission to Somalia from 9 to 10 November.

On 12 November the PSC is set to consider three agenda items. In the morning session the PSC will receive a briefing on AU Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD). This will be the second session on the theme to take place within this year, in line with PSC's 2021 indicative annual programme of activities, which envisages convening twice to review PCRD efforts in the continent. It is to be recalled that the first meeting on the theme took place at Council's 1017th meeting convened in August, with a focus on AU support to member States in political transition and in post-conflict situations. At the upcoming session, Council may follow up on

some of its key decisions made at the 1017th session, mainly on the reactivation of the PSC Sub-Committee on PCRD and its request for the Chairperson of the AU Commission to submit a comprehensive report on implementation of PCRD activities in Africa.

In the afternoon of 12 November, Council will convene its joint consultative meeting with the UNPBC. It is to be recalled that the two bodies had their last annual consultative meeting in October 2020, where country specific, regional and thematic peace and security issues of common concern were discussed. The upcoming meeting provides the stage for further reflection on these issues and to exchange ideas on how the AUPSC and UNPBC can further consolidate collaborations on peacebuilding in Africa, particularly taking account of the need to give effect to the contents of the Common African Position on the 2020 Review of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture adopted at Council's 948th session.

The consideration and adoption of the draft programme of work for the month of December is also expected to take place on 12 November, through email exchanges.

The next PSC session is scheduled for 15 November, although the date is yet to be confirmed. The session is planned to take place at the ministerial level and will be committed to the theme of countering radicalism and extremist ideologies in Africa. In October 2021, Council already convened a ministerial level session to consider the report of the Chairperson of the AU Commission on continental efforts in the prevention and combating of terrorism in Africa. This trend demonstrates that the PSC is giving much needed attention to the interconnected concern of radicalisation, extremism and terrorism, which are intensifying, in some parts of the continent.

On 17 November, Council will be convening to receive a briefing on the situation in Libya. In May 2021, Council

convened a ministerial session on Libya (997th meeting) where the AU Commission was requested to provide regular progress reports on the implementation of AU decisions aimed at supporting the Libyan transitional process. The upcoming briefing could therefore highlight, among others, the status of preparations for the planned general elections, particularly regarding finalization of all necessary constitutional frameworks, and more generally, the challenges and progresses in the implementation of the October 2020 Ceasefire Agreement.

The final substantive session of the month will be convened on 26 November, addressing climate change and peace and security in Africa. The session is a timely one provided that the current year has seen increasing impacts of and corresponding concerns over climate change. It is also to be recalled that one of the agenda items of Council's 984th session convened at the summit level was dedicated to climate change and its effects on peace and security in Africa. At that session, decisions were adopted including establishing an AU special fund on climate change. In addition, the AU Commission was requested to submit a report elaborating the nexus between climate change and peace and security in Africa and also to provide updates regarding the appointment of AU Special Envoy for climate change and security. The upcoming session presents the opportunity to also follow up on these decisions.

As envisaged in the footnotes of Council's indicative programme of work for the month, meetings may be scheduled as needed, to assess situations in Chad, Guinea, Mali, Somalia and Sudan, countries currently facing pressing peace and security challenges. The footnotes also indicate that the 12th Annual Retreat of AU High Representatives is expected to take place from 1 to 3 November and engagement of PSC CoE with UNSC Experts as well as preparations for the PSC-UNSC annual joint consultative meeting is to continue in New York, from 22 to 24 November.