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

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In October, Mozambique will assume the chairship of the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC). The Council's provisional programme of work for the month envisages six substantive sessions, including two address country specific issues. The program of work also envisages a Ministerial session and a Heads of State and Government level meeting.

On 4 October the Committee of Experts is expected to meet to prepare on four agenda items: the 5th joint retreat and 13th annual joint consultative meeting with the European Union Political and Security Committee (EUPSC), the 6th joint seminar and 16th annual consultative meeting with the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), the 8th High Level Seminar and the PSC Heads of State and Government level meeting expected to be held at the end of October.

The first substantive session of the month is expected to take place on 5 October. Three agenda items are tabled for the Council to consider during this session. The first two agenda items are postponed from the previous month. The first agenda item will be consideration of strategic priorities for the utilisation of the AU Peace Fund. It is to be recalled that the PSC Committee of Experts convened considered this agenda item in August under Cameroon's chairship. The upcoming session could hence serve to update Council which types of peace and security initiatives the Committee of Experts has identified as priority areas to receive funding through the three thematic windows of the Peace Fund.

The second agenda item is dedicated to the consideration of a zero draft African consensus paper on the financing of AU-led peace support operations (PSOs) using UN assessed contributions. The submission of the draft was requested at Council's 986th session, where the AU Commission was requested to develop a paper presenting common African position for funding of AU PSOs through UN assessed contributions. Both agenda items are expected to be presented by the Chairperson of the PSC Committee of Experts for August 2021, Cameroon.

The third one is an update on the situation in Guinea. The upcoming session is expected to assess the political developments in Guinea in light of the PSC's decisions taken at its 1030th session that took place on 10 September 2021. In that session, it is to be recalled that the PSC threatened to impose targeted sanctions against coup plotters upon failing to comply with the demands of the Council for the military to return to the barracks, uphold principle of constitutionalism, and refrain from further political interference. A major development of interest to the Council since its last session on that country is the announcement of a transitional charter by the military junta on 28 September outlining the transitional organs and their respective duties.

On 7 October, the Council will convene its second substantive session to receive a briefing on the situation in Somalia and the activities of African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). This session comes at the backdrop of the latest political turmoil that gripped Somalia after fallout between Prime Minister Mohamed Hussein Roble and President Mohamed Abdullahi Farmajo over the death of an intelligence agent. As this session will be convened few days before the presidential election which is set for 10 October, it is an opportunity for the Council to assess the political and security context within which the election is to take place with the view to ensuring a credible and peaceful presidential election, as well as preventing electoral violence. In relation to AMISOM,

the Council is likely to receive update on the activities of AMISOM particularly in the areas of joint military operations with Somali National Army (SNA), electoral assistance provided to the 2021 elections, as well as support provided to the implementation of the Somali Transition Plan (STP). The Council may also follow up on the progress towards developing the joint CONOPS for the new 'AU Transition Mission post-2021'.

The PSC Committee of Experts will convene on 11 October, to consider a proposed outline for the PSC Report, which is to be submitted to the AU Assembly during the January/February 2022 AU Summit.

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

The PSC is also scheduled to convene a meeting on 19 October to assess the implementation of its Work Plans of 2020-2021: Achievements, Challenges and Way forward. On the same date, Council will also meet to prepare for the Annual Joint Consultative Meetings with the EUPSC and UNSC.

On 21 October, the Council will meet at a ministerial level to consider the report of the Chairperson of the AU Commission on continental efforts in prevention and combating of terrorism in Africa. The report is in line with the Assembly decision (/AU/Dec.311 (XV)) of its 15th Ordinary Session, held in July 2010, which, inter alia, requested the Commission to submit regular reports on the status of the fight and cooperation against terrorism in Africa. Since then, the Council has been convening annual sessions on the theme including the last one at its 957th meeting that took place on 20 October 2020. The Chairperson's report is expected to facilitate deliberations of the Council by highlighting an outlook of the state of terrorism in Africa and the continental efforts to address the scourge.

On 26 October, the PSC is expected to hold an open session dedicated to the commemoration of the adoption of UNSC Resolution 1325, a landmark resolution on women, peace and security which underscores the importance of women's equal participation and full engagement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. Over the years, the Council has held annual commemorative sessions on the adoption of this resolution under different themes and this year's session is expected to take place under the theme: 'Impact of COVID-19 on Women, Peace and Security Agenda'.

The last session of the month is scheduled to take place on 29 October at the level of Heads of State and Government, the first summit level meeting since 9 March 2021, to address the issue of disaster management in Africa and the challenges and perspectives for human security. The continent is confronted with a surge in the occurrence of many disasters notably climate related disaster, diseases and pandemics, and conflicts that have impacted human security in multiple ways. The disasters, which is further compounded by the outbreak of COVID-19, have caused loss of lives, displacement, and massive damages and destruction of infrastructure. While the convening of the session at a summit level shows the magnitude of the problem and the political weight attached to the theme, it is also an opportunity for the Council to critically reflect on what the increasing trend of disasters mean to human security in Africa, the available institutional and normative frameworks to address the issue at a continental level, and how best to respond to the mounting challenges posed by disasters.

The provisional program of work for the month also indicates in footnotes the possibility of holding a session to consider the report of the AU Assessment Mission to The Comoros at a date and time yet to be confirmed. The footnotes also indicate that there could be a retreat of the PSC Committee of Experts on the status of implementation of PSC decisions, on a date

also to be determined.