

PSC Program of Work for the Month of August 2018

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Zambia assumes the role of the monthly chairpersonship of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) for the month of August when the monthly program of work of the PSC commences tomorrow 1 August. Compared to the last two months and owing to the African Union (AU) summit, the June program is relatively light. In July, the PSC had few substantive meetings with no open session. The joint consultative meeting with the UN Security Council and the field mission to Guinea Bissau took a significant amount of its work of the month.

Like the previous month, the program of the month for August would also be light. The PSC is scheduled to have two open sessions during the month. The PSC also plans to undertake one field mission.

The first session of the month is scheduled for 7 August. The focus of this session is on the preparation for the Amnesty Month within the context of the African Union Master Roadmap of Practical Steps to Silence the Guns in Africa. The amnesty month is taking place in the framework of the July 2017 decision of the 29th Assembly of the African Union (AU) to declare the month of September of each year, until 2020, as "Africa Amnesty Month" for the surrender and collection of illicit small arms and light weapons (SALW). The meeting will examine preparations for the month that among other things sensitize Member States on their obligations to conduct annual voluntary disarmament initiatives. It would also review the implementation modalities and progress made in implementing this decision.

On 9 August 2018, the PSC will look at the preparation for the Annual Consultative Meeting between the PSC and the African

Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR), the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOC), the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights (AfCHPR) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC). On that same session, the PSC will also consider and adopt the Draft Provisional Programme of Work of the PSC for September 2018.

On 14 August, the PSC will have an open session on Ending Child Marriage, a theme that the AU Assembly assigned President Edgar Lungu of Zambia to be the champion. The Council will examine the issue in the framework of the Joint General Comment on Child Marriage by the AU Committee on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and the African Commission on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR). From the burgeoning thematic issues featuring on the agenda of the PSC, perhaps this is a good example having little, if any, direct link with the core mandate of the PSC.

On 16 July, the Council will consider Africa's security priorities in line with Agenda 2063. In the light of the proliferation of the scope and diversity of the issues on the agenda of the PSC and the dynamic changes in the peace and security landscape of the continent, the consideration of Africa's security priorities deserves serious attention.

The second open session of the month 'Towards Peace, Security and Prosperity on the Continent. Embracing the Value of Democracy and Governance: Is the AU Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance Adequate?' will take place on 22 August 2018.

On 23 August, the annual Consultative Meeting between the PSC, ACHPR/ ECOSOC/ AfCHPR/ACRWC will take place. While this is meant to give effect to Articles 18, 19 and 20 of the PSC Protocol, the format of lumping together bodies having diverse working modalities and comparative advantages is problematic for the proper operationalization of these provisions. The preparatory meeting for the field mission to Lesotho is also

scheduled to take place following the joint session.

The field mission to Lesotho is scheduled to take place from 26 to 29 of August 2018. The mission will engage with the different stakeholders in the country including the SADC Preventive Mission in the Kingdom of Lesotho (SAPMIL) being undertaken within the framework of the African Standby Force (ASF).

The 31 August Briefing by the Chairperson of the PSC to the PRC on the activities of the PSC during the month of August 2018 will be the last agenda item of the month.