

The Candidates for the 2020 elections of the PSC

Automatic Heading TextDate | 2 February, 2020The tenure of ten members of the PSC (Table 1 below) serving for a two-year term is set to end at the end of March 2020. Accordingly, one of the agenda items during the summit scheduled to take place this week is the election of the ten new or returning members of the PSC. Pursuant to Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.106 (VI) of the

Sixth Ordinary Session of the Assembly delegating the power of the Assembly to elect members of PSC, under Article 5(2) of the PSC Protocol, to the Executive Council, the elections for the two-year term seats of the PSC will be held during the 36th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council scheduled to take place on 6 & 7 February 2020.

Table 1 PSC members whose two-year term ends in March 2020

Region	States whose term ends in 2019
Central Africa	Equatorial Guinea and Gabon
East Africa	Djibouti and Rwanda
North Africa	Morocco
Southern Africa	Angola and Zimbabwe
West Africa	Liberia, Sierra Leone and Togo

The procedures for the election of members of the PSC are set out in the Protocol establishing the Peace and Security Council of the AU (PSC Protocol) and the Modalities for Election of PSC Members adopted in 2004. Most notably, Article 5 (1) of the PSC Protocol states that the Council's membership is to be decided according to the principle of 'equitable regional representation and rotation'. In terms of regional representation, for the two-year term, while East

Africa, Southern Africa and Central Africa are allocated two seats each, West Africa and North Africa are allocated three seats and one seat respectively.

In July 2019, the AU Commission sent out a Note Verbale to States Parties to the PSC Protocol indicating the elections of ten (10) members of the PSC scheduled to take place during the February Summit and inviting them to submit candidates for the election by the dead line of 30 November 2019. After the deadline was extended to 17 December to the Eastern and Southern Africa regions, the final list of candidates received by the Office of the Legal Counsel are the ones shown in the map below. In terms of previous record of election to the PSC, the table below offers the statistics relating to the candidates from the five regions of the AU.

Table 2 Previous membership of candidates for the 2020 PSC election

Region	Available Seats in the 2020 Election	States Running	Years Previously Served on the Council/th>
Central Africa	2	Cameroon and Chad	Cameroon was elected three times to the PSC (2004, 2006, 2012) each time for two-year term and Chad was elected four times (2008, 2010, 2014 & 2016)

Eastern Africa	2	Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan	Djibouti was elected three times previously in 2010, 2012 and 2018; Ethiopia was elected three times in 2004, and 2007 for three-year term and 2014 for twoyear term; Somalia was never elected to the PSC & Sudan was elected once in 2004 for a twoyear term.
Northern Africa	1	Egypt	Egypt was elected three times, in 2006 and 2012 for two-year terms and in 2016 for three-year term
Southern Africa	2	Malawi and Mozambique	Malawi was elected once in 2006 for two-year term and Mozambique was elected twice in 2004 for two-year term and in 2013 for three-year term.
Western Africa	3	Benin, Ghana, Liberia, and Senegal	Benin was elected twice in 2008 & 2010 for tow year term; Ghana was elected ones in 2004, although it was a candidate in 2012 before withdrawing in favor of The Gambia; Liberia was elected ones in 2018 for twoyear term; Senegal was elected twice in 2004 and 2006 on both occasions for two-year term.

Of the current list of candidates for membership of the new PSC whose term of office starts in April 2020, Somalia is the only State Party to the PSC Protocol that never previously served on the Council. Djibouti and Liberia are

standing for re-election, while the remaining candidates are running again after a period of absence from the PSC.

In terms of previous membership (rotation of membership), Ghana, Malawi and Sudan are the only candidates that served in the PSC only once. While Chad was elected four times serving a total of eight years, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, and Mozambique have previously served in the PSC three times serving six, seven, eight and seven years respectively. The remaining candidates were previously elected to the PSC twice.

Southern Africa remains the region that generally follows the requirement of rotation of membership. As in the past, the number of candidates fielded from the region is equal to the number of seats available for the region as per Articles 9 and 10 of the Modalities for the Election of Members of the PSC. The Central Africa and North

Africa regions also fielded the same number of candidates as seats available for the two regions.

East Africa and West Africa have higher number of candidates than the seats allocated to the two regions. In East Africa, a region known for fielding higher number of candidates than available seats, four countries are running for two seats. of the four countries, Ethiopia was a candidate for the 2019 election and lost for Kenya for the three-year term seat. West Africa, which is usually known for fielding candidates on a consensual basis, has one candidate more than the three seats available to the region.

Apart from regional representation and rotation, the PSC Protocol under Article 5(2)) and the Modalities for the Election of Members of the PSC (Article 6) lay down additional election criteria. These include a commitment to uphold the principles of the African Union; contribution to the promotion and maintenance of peace and security in Africa; provision of capacity and commitment to shoulder the responsibilities entailed in membership; respect for constitutional governance, the rule of

law and human rights; and the availability of a sufficiently staffed and equipped Permanent Mission at the AU and the UN. Looking at the list of candidates, it clearly emerges that in practice the requirements under Article 5(2) of the PSC Protocol don't usually complied with and have thus become secondary to the requirements of regional representation and rotation. While the focus on regional representation and rotation makes membership in the PSC egalitarian, the failure to enforce requirements of Article 5(2) was not without its consequences for the effectiveness of the PSC.