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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL  
1337<sup>TH</sup> MEETING

8 APRIL 2026  
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/PS.1337 (2026)

PRESS STATEMENT



## PRESS STATEMENT

**The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) dedicated its 1337<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 8 April 2026, to an Open Session on the theme: Hate Crimes and Fighting Genocidal Ideology in Africa and the 32<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary Commemoration of the Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda.**

Council took note of the opening remarks by H.E. Ambassador Hirut Zemene Kassa, Permanent Representative of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to the African Union (AU) and Chairperson of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the AU for April 2026; the Introductory Statement by H.E. Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, read on his behalf by Ms. Neema Chusi, Head of the PSC Secretariat Division.

Council also took note of the statement by H.E. Maj. Gen. (Rtd) Charles Karamba, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Rwanda to the AU, as well as the statements by AU Member States.

Council recalled Assembly Decision [Assembly/AU/Dec.695] adopted by the 31<sup>st</sup> Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government, held from 1 to 2 July 2018, in Nouakchott, Mauritania, which designated the 7<sup>th</sup> of April of each year as the AU Day of the Commemoration of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda.

Council also recalled Article 4(h), (j) and (o) of the AU Constitutive Act and Aspirations 4 and 5 of Agenda 2063, and reaffirmed the respect for, and sanctity of, human life as enshrined in the AU Constitutive Act, the Charter of the United Nations (UN), the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide of 1948.

Council further recalled all its previous decisions and pronouncements on Hate and Fighting Genocidal ideology in Africa, particularly, Communiqué PSC/PR/COMM.(DCLXXVIII) adopted at its 678<sup>th</sup> meeting of 11 April 2017, which decided to hold an annual session on the prevention of hate ideology, genocide and hate crimes in Africa in the context of the commemoration of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda; the Press Statements [PSC/PR/COMM.1272 (2025)] adopted at its 1272<sup>nd</sup> meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2025 and [PSC/PR/BR.1206 (2024)] adopted at its 1206<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 4 April 2024.

Council marked the 32<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda under the theme - *Remember, Unite, Renew*, as a vital reminder to fight against ideologies of hate and protect human dignity across the continent; in this context, expressed solidarity with those affected by the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda.

Council recalled decision Assembly/AU/Dec.953(XXXIX) adopted by the 39<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, in February 2026, recognizing slavery, deportation, and colonization as crimes against humanity and genocide against the peoples of Africa.

Council welcomed the progress made on various regulatory and institutional frameworks aimed at ensuring that accountability for the perpetrators of these crimes is strictly enforced with the view to ensuring that the mantra of “never again” is operationalized, and to forbid genocide denialism.

Council noted the evolving situation in some parts of Africa, including reports of human rights violations and also acknowledged the impact on affected individuals and communities and highlighted the importance of protecting civilians, preserving relevant evidence, and supporting accountability processes.

Council encouraged all AU Member States that have not yet done so to promulgate legislation and establish national institutions for the effective prevention and combating of the ideology of hate, hate crimes, and genocide; and encouraged AU Member States to sign, ratify, and domesticate the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide of 1948 and other relevant treaties at the national level and to adopt national legislation criminalizing hate speech, genocide denial, and incitement to violence.

Council recognized the crucial role of education in mitigating hate speech and violence; in this respect encouraged AU Member States to strengthen genocide prevention through civic education by fostering critical thinking, historical literacy, and human rights awareness to combat prejudice, hate speech, and intolerance; and underlined the need to invest in youth education to serve as champions of tolerance and combating hate speech, as well as to promote positive narratives to counter divisive ones and enhancing inclusion.

Council called for enhanced cooperation among AU Member States and with international partners to arrest and prosecute perpetrators of genocide and hate crimes.

Council requested the AU Commission to strengthen the AU's early warning mechanisms to detect early warning signs in situations which could degenerate into violent conflicts and genocide in order to monitor, assess, and respond to, actionable risk factors that indicate a situation is degenerating from political tension into mass atrocities.

Council further called for promotion of continental mechanisms aimed at monitoring and countering denial narratives, including across online platforms, and preventing the spread of hate speech; and encouraged AU Member States to always promote and embrace the politics of interests and strongly reject identity politics which in many instances can bring divisions among the communities and lead to violent conflict and genocide.

Council underscored the need to promote active participation of social media in raising awareness crucial to halting violence before it escalates; in this respect, called for social media to play a positive role in promotion of tolerance, dialogue and reconciliation.

Council stressed the need to reinforce measures aimed at enhancing collaboration among AU Member States to effectively address cross-border threats posed by networks promoting genocidal ideology.

Council supported the efforts at the grassroots level to foster inclusive dialogue, reconciliation, and resilience against hate ideology and the promotion of a culture of peace and tolerance in communities.

Council underlined the imperative of promoting truth-telling initiatives and memorialization efforts aimed at safeguarding historical accuracy and preventing denial narratives.

Council stressed the need for the establishment of a Continental Research Centre on Hate Speech and Genocide ideology, following the due process, with a mandate to regularly inform AU Member States, Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs) and AU Commission, with a view to provide technical support for strengthening national policies on preventing and combating the ideology of genocide and hate speech crimes.

Council requested the Panel of the Wise to undertake a review of the status of implementation of the recommendations contained in the Report of the OAU International Panel of Eminent Personalities on the 1994 Rwanda Genocide and the Surrounding Events.

Council directed the AU Commission to continue supporting AU Member States to address the root causes of hate ideology, prevent violence, and strengthen resilience in communities; and to ensure full utilisation of continental frameworks and policy standards such as the AU Transitional Justice Policy and the Post Conflict and Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) Policy to promote national reconciliation, healing and accountability in the continent.

Council expressed appreciation for the constructive and principled statements by the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Republic of Rwanda on the issue of fighting hate crime and genocide ideology in Africa; and

Council agreed to remain actively seized of the matter.