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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
1345TH MEETING

6 MAY 2026
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/COMM.1345 (2026)

COMMUNIQUÉ



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Adopted by the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) at its 1345th meeting held on 6 May 2026, a discussion on African strategies for combating transnational organized crime in Africa:

The Peace and Security Council,

Recalling all previous communiqués and pronouncements related to the scourges of terrorism, organized crime, drug trafficking, trafficking in persons, illicit financial flows and the situation in regions of concern including the Sahel, the Lake Chad Basin, the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes Region, particularly Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.1279 (2025)] adopted at its 1279th meeting held on 14 May 2025; Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.1082 (2022)] adopted at its 1082nd meeting held on 6 May 2022;

Referring to the AU Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption (Maputo, 2003); the AU Plan of Action on Drug Control and Crime Prevention (2019-2025) and its successor framework currently under development; the Ouagadougou Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings, Especially Women and Children (2006); the AU Strategy on the Control of Illicit Proliferation, Circulation and Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons, anchored in the Bamako Declaration (2000); the AU Master Roadmap of Practical Steps to Silence the Guns in Africa by the Year 2030 (Lusaka, 2016); the Continental Guidelines for Sharing Information and Intelligence to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants (Kampala, December 2024); and the Gaborone Strategic Framework for Action on Strengthening Continental Responses to Address Illicit Synthetic Drug Production, Trafficking, and Related Transnational Organized Crime (August 2025); and Aspiration 4 of Agenda 2063 envisioning a peaceful and secure Africa;

Taking note of the opening remarks by H.E. Ambassador Nasir Aminu, Permanent Representative of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to the AU and Chairperson of the PSC for the month of May 2026; the Introductory Statement by H.E. Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, the Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security read on his behalf by Ms. Neema Chusi, the Head of the PSC Secretariat; as well as the statements by H.E. Ambassador Jalel Chelab, Acting Director of the AU Mechanism for Police Cooperation (AFRIPOL) read on his behalf by Dr. Mohamed Benaired; the statement by H.E. Mr. Jacksom Hamata, the Executive Secretary of the Committee of Intelligence and Security Services of Africa (CISSA); and the statement by Ms. Precious Obonetse Tlhabiwa, Special Representative of the International Police Organization (INTERPOL) to the AU; and

Acting under Article 7 of its Protocol, the Peace and Security Council:

1. **Expresses deep concern** over the worrisome transformation of the criminal landscape in Africa, marked by the emergence of an integrated, hybrid and transnational criminal ecosystem in which terrorism, drug trafficking, trafficking in persons, environmental crime, cybercrime and financial crime increasingly converge, sharing corridors, financing mechanisms and operational logistics, thereby undermining AU efforts in addressing peace, security and development issues across the continent, jeopardizing the realization of Aspiration 4 of Agenda 2063 and the goal of Silencing the Guns in Africa; also **expresses deep concern over:**

- a) The deepening nexus between terrorism, violent extremism and transnational organized crime, particularly in the Central Sahel and the Lake Chad Basin, assessed at very high to critical threat levels, where non-state armed groups are increasingly integrated into criminal logistics chains through the organization, protection and taxation of trafficking activities, and by the demonstrated capacity of these groups to coordinate complex operations, as illustrated

by the simultaneous attacks of 25 April 2026 in Bamako, Gao and Kidal targeting State infrastructure;

- b) The rapid digital transformation of organized crime, with cybercrime and financial crime now occupying a central position in the criminal economy, evidenced by the convergence of cyber-fraud, cryptocurrency-based money laundering, the exploitation of mobile money platforms, and the documented use by JNIM, Ansaru and ISWAP of cryptocurrency and encrypted communication tools for financing, recruitment and operational coordination; the geographic expansion of the terrorism threat, including the southward projection of the JNIM towards coastal West African States and northern Benin, the consolidation of the Islamic State in the Sahel in eastern Niger, and the persistent operational reach of Al-Shabaab into Kenya and beyond, indicating a strategic effort by terrorist groups to access economic corridors and the Atlantic seaboard;
- c) The high money-laundering risk profile of Central Africa, West Africa and East Africa, as documented by the Basel AML Index 2025, and by the central role of illicit financial flows in sustaining the operational resilience of criminal and terrorist networks across the continent;
- d) The structural integration of environmental crime into transnational organized criminal economies, particularly the illicit trafficking of gold from the Ituri region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo through Central African corridors to international markets, the persistent ivory trafficking along the East African corridor, and the militarization of these activities, with annual losses from illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing in East Africa alone estimated at USD 415 million;
- e) The hybridization of trafficking in persons with cybercrime, including cases in which African nationals are recruited under false pretexts and transferred across borders to be exploited in online scam operations, as well as by the persistent role of Libya as a major hub of human exploitation, where migrants are subjected to systemic abuse, debt bondage and extortion in clandestine facilities, particularly in Kufra; and
- f) The emergence of synthetic drug production capacity on the continent, including the dismantling in 2025 of a clandestine laboratory in Khartoum capable of producing up to 100,000 tablets per hour, the seizure of 93 kg of crystal methamphetamine at the port of Benghazi, and the implications of these developments for the consolidation of Africa as a synthetic drug production zone;

2. **Underscores the need** to adopt mutual trust-based and integrated approaches and inter-agency intelligence sharing models at the national and regional levels, and specifically **calls for** the strengthening of cross-border operations, targeting cross-border criminal networks, especially on the Sahel-North Africa-Europe and Gulf of Guinea routes;

3. **Calls upon** AU Member States to create joint police, customs, financial intelligence, and cyber units along identified criminal corridors rather than work in isolation based on crime typologies;

4. **Urges** Member States to harmonize national operational plans of action and performance indicators in sectors covering issues related to arrests made, criminal networks and infrastructure dismantled, illicit financial flows intercepted, traced, recovered and returned in different regions of Africa and, in this connection, and **appeals** to Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs) that have not yet done so to consider adopting mechanisms for mutual legal assistance and extradition of criminal elements anchored on trust;

5. **Also calls upon** AU Member States, particularly those from the Central, East and Western Africa Regions, to strengthen their respective mechanisms on anti-money laundering and the illicit financial flows ; **stresses the need** to develop advanced financial investigation capabilities, strengthen internal control, audit and integrity mechanisms within public institutions, including customs, police, banks, and to implement mechanisms for the traceability of seizures and financial flows in order to curtail embezzlement, particularly in critical areas, such as airports and seaports; as well as to enhance the capacity of their respective enforcement officers to detect, infiltrate and dismantle criminal digital networks and in this regard, **calls** for the strengthening of partnerships between national, international and private sectors in order to improve early detection of threats;
6. **Underscores the importance** of further strengthening the national security presence and surveillance capacities of Member States particularly on major corridors such as in the Sahel, Gulf of Guinea, and Horn of Africa, and in this regard, **calls upon** international partners and AU Member States in a position to do so, to support countries in these regions with surveillance technologies, such as drones, satellite imagery, mapping and traceability systems, to enable them more adequately counter the tactical adaptation strategies of criminal networks;
7. **Encourages** AU Member States to develop targeted programmes against all forms of trafficking, radicalization and criminal recruitment, taking into account the root causes and structural factors fuelling them, and integrating good governance, infrastructural development, and socio-economic dimensions into strategies for countering the activities of organized criminal networks;
8. **Calls for** the integration of Transnational Organised Crimes analysis into AU early warning mechanism, mediation efforts, sanctions regimes, peace support operations, Security Sector Reform (SSR), Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) efforts, as well as stabilization and Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) processes;
9. **Emphasizes** the need to strengthen natural resource governance, particularly national capacities to trace resources and recover illicitly exploited and exported natural resources and to strengthen Government’s presence and control in extraction areas as well as ports and other corridors for the transportation of such resources;
10. **Commends** AFRIPOL, AU Counter-Terrorism Centre (AUCTC), CISSA, INTERPOL and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for their invaluable efforts in combating transnational organized crime in Africa, and **underscores the importance** of providing them with adequate human, technical and financial resources to enable them to effectively discharge their mandate;
11. **Requests** the AU Commission, working in close collaboration with the, AFRIPOL, AUCTC, CISSA and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) to finalize, before the end of 2026, a Matrix of Risks and Threats to Peace and Security in Africa, as a tool of the Continental Early Warning System;
12. **Directs** the AU Commission, working in collaboration with the relevant AU structures, to undertake a study on the financing sources of criminal networks in Africa, within the available resources, with a view to considering targeted measures aimed at drying up these sources and consequently reducing the operational capacity of such criminal networks;
13. **Further directs** the AU Commission, working in close collaboration with AFRIPOL, to establish a structured and integrated continental mechanism inspired by the INTERPOL system of notices, coupled with an African “continental warrant” framework.
14. **Mandates** AFRIPOL, working in coordination with the AU Commission and RECs/RMs, to establish, following due process, a Continental Criminal Intelligence Mechanism for the continuous

mapping, analysis and dissemination of criminal flows, corridors and networks, within the available resources, and to deliver a consolidated continental threat assessment to the Peace and Security Council on an annual basis;

15. **Encourages** the AUC, international partners and Member States, in a position to do so, to mobilize adequate financial and human resources, including voluntary contributions, to support the development of AFRIPOL's analytical, operational and capacity-building activities;

16. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.