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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL  
1346<sup>TH</sup> MEETING

15 MAY 2026  
ADDIS-ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/COMM.1346.1 (2026)

**COMMUNIQUÉ**



## COMMUNIQUÉ

**Adopted by the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), at its 1346<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 15 May 2026, on the update on the operationalization of the African Standby Force (ASF):**

### The Peace and Security Council,

**Recalling** Decision [Assembly/AU/Dec.978 (XXXIX)] adopted by the Assembly of the Union at its 39<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 14 to 15 February 2026, through which the Assembly directed the Commission to expedite the signing and operationalisation of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the African Union (AU) and the Regional Economic Communities and the Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs) on the Use of the African Standby Force and to report regularly on the status of its implementation;

**Referring** to all previous decisions and pronouncements of Council on the ASF in particular, Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.1257 (2025)] adopted at its 1257<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 30 January 2025 and Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.1007 (2021)] adopted at its 1007<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 8 July 2021; and the relevant decisions of the Specialized Technical Committee on Defence, Safety and Security (STCDSS), particularly the outcomes of the 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Sessions of the STCDSS relating to the Strategic Review and continuous enhancement of the ASF;

**Reaffirming** the continued relevance of the ASF as one of the key pillars of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), as envisaged under Article 13 of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union;

**Mindful** of the evolving Continental peace and security landscape, coupled with the increasing use of new technologies such as unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and the transnational nature of most security threats facing the Continent, such as terrorism, which require constant review of existing tools with a view to ensuring their adaptation to the challenges at hand;

**Taking note** of the Opening Remarks by H.E. Ambassador Nasir Aminu, Permanent Representative of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to the AU and PSC Chairperson for the month of May 2026; the Introductory Statement by H.E. Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security; and the statements by the representatives of RECs/RMs; and

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

1. **Takes note** of the briefing by the AU Commission and RECs/RMs on their efforts towards the operationalization of the African Standby Force (ASF);
2. **Welcomes** the efforts of the AU Commission, in advancing the operationalization of the ASF, strengthening coordination with RECs/RMs and strategic partners and in supporting initiatives aimed at enhancing Africa's peace efforts and rapid deployment capabilities;
3. **Reaffirms** the continued relevance of the ASF as a key pillar of APSA and as an important instrument for swift responses to peace and security challenges facing the Continent; and **underscores the need** for regular review of the ASF Doctrine to ensure that the Force easily adapts to the evolving threats and the dynamism in the Continental peace and security landscape;
4. **Applauds** the undertaking of a phased and consultative ASF Strategic Review process involving AU Member States, RECs/RMs, ASF Planning Elements (PLANELMs), the Military Staff Committee

(MSC), Training Centres of Excellence, experts and strategic partners and **welcomes** the progress made thus far in the implementation of the recommendations from the Strategic Review;

5. **Welcomes** the adoption, by the 17<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the STCDSS, of the recommendations from the Strategic Review of the ASF, and the request by the STCDSS for the Commission to develop an operational work plan aimed at supporting the continuous enhancement, readiness and effectiveness of the ASF; and further **welcomes** the adoption of the MoU on the Utilization of the ASF by the 39<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government; **calls** for its timely operationalisation through clear implementation modalities, strengthened coordination mechanisms and sustained political commitment by Member States, RECs/RMs and relevant stakeholders and **encourages** the AU Commission and RECs/RMs to expedite its entry into force;

6. **Notes** the efforts being deployed to support the maritime component of the ASF; and in this context, **underscores** the strategic importance of the Gulf of Guinea and the urgent need for operationalizing the Combined Maritime Task Force within the framework of the ASF;

7. **Further notes** the efforts being deployed to support the maritime component and capabilities of the ASF across the five regions and **underscores** the need to expedite the operationalization of the regional support forces and enhance their interoperability, as well as their logistics and rapid deployment capacities;

8. **Emphasizes the importance** of strengthening key ASF strategic lift, its logistics capabilities and the Continental Command, Control, Communication and Information System (C3IS) in support of the ASF's readiness, responsiveness, and rapid deployment capabilities, and **stresses the need** to further enhance joint planning, readiness verification mechanisms, mission support systems, and operational coordination between the AU and RECs/RMs Planning Elements within the framework of the principle of subsidiarity;

9. **Calls for** enhanced interoperability, strengthened operational readiness, harmonized planning and decision-making processes, as well as improved logistics, rapid deployment, and mission support capabilities in support of AU-led and AU-authorized Peace Support Operations (PSOs);

10. **Welcomes** engagements and consultations aimed at consolidating stakeholders' perspectives and implementation of the recommendations of the ASF Strategic Review to refine stakeholder inputs and consultations highlighting the need for stronger political commitment, interoperability, readiness verification, sustainable financing, and improved AU-RECs/RMs coordination, joint consultations and validation, as well as joint AU-UN planning, decision-making guidelines under the ASF Operational Framework;

11. **Stresses the need** for predictable, adequate and sustainable financing arrangements to support the readiness and deployment capabilities of the ASF; and **calls** for the full and effective implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 2719 (2023) as the only way of ensuring predictable, adequate and sustainable resources for AU-led Peace Support Operations;

12. **Directs** the AU Commission to continue resource mobilization efforts in favour of the ASF; **recognises** the importance of the Continental Logistics Base; and regional logistic depots; **welcomes** the structures approved by the 36<sup>th</sup> ordinary session of the Assembly, and **appeals** to the international partners and AU Member States, in a position to do so, to support efforts aimed at mobilizing the required budget of USD 4,717,606.45 for the approved structures;

13. **Requests** the AU Commission to continue consultations with Member States, RECs/RMs and relevant stakeholders towards the finalization and implementation of the operational work plan emerging from the ASF Strategic Review process;
14. **Urges** the AU Commission to continue deploying efforts aimed at further strengthening the operational readiness, responsiveness and effectiveness of the ASF, including through the finalization of strategic planning and the operational guidance framework;
15. **Requests** the Commission, working in coordination with the RECs/RMs, to provide an updated briefing to Council on technical, logistical, operational requirements and gaps to be urgently addressed through a clear and detailed dashboard, by July 2026;
16. **Looks forward** to the successful organization of the next Abuja Lessons Learnt Forum; and
17. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.