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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
1357TH MEETING

3 AUGUST 2026
ADDIS-ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/COMM.1357 (2026)

COMMUNIQUE



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Adopted by the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) at its 1357th meeting held on 3 August 2026 on Education in Conflict Situations in Africa.

The Peace and Security Council,

Recalling all its previous decisions and pronouncements on education in conflict situations, in particular, Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.1296 (2025)] adopted at its 1296th Open Session held on 13 August 2025 and Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.1229 (2024)], adopted at its 1229th meeting held on 21 August 2024; **referring** to the AU commitment to promoting and protecting children's rights in fulfilment of the relevant provisions of the AU Constitutive Act and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC); and **also recalling** Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.1110 (2022)] adopted during its 1110th meeting held on 5 October 2022 on the prevention of the recruitment and use of children in conflict situations; **also reaffirming** the obligations set out in the 2009 AU Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention), the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and its 2000 Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, as well as the Safe Schools Declaration and its Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict as the foundational operational framework for protecting education from attack and military usage;

Recalling Agenda 2063 that underscored Africa's human capital is the most precious resource that must be developed through sustained investments;

Taking note of the opening remarks by H.E. Dr. Ambassador Mohamed Khaled, Permanent Representative of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria to the AU and Chairperson of the PSC for the month of August 2026; and the Introductory Remarks by H.E. Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security; the presentations by H.E. Professor Gaspard Banyankimba, Commissioner for Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (ESTI); by H.E. Ambassador Amma Twum-Amoah, Commissioner for Social Development, Health, and Humanitarian Affairs; by Hon. Sabrina Gahar, the Chairperson of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC);

Also taking note of the statements by H.E. Ambassador Jainaba Jagne, AU Special Envoy on Children Affected by Armed Conflict (CAAC); by H.E. Ambassador Rebecca Amuge Otengo, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Uganda to the AU, and Co-Chair of the African Platform on Children Affected by Armed Conflicts (AP-CAAC); as well as by the Representative of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); AU Member States; and by the Representatives of Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs); and

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

A. On the overall situation

1. **Expresses deep concern** over the alarming impact of conflicts and crisis situations on education marked, among others, by deliberate and indiscriminate attacks against schools, abduction and recruitment of school children and personnel, military use of educational facilities, unexploded ordinances and diversion of public resources away from education; and **strongly condemns** all attacks against children and their abduction and recruitment by armed groups, as well as the military use of educational facilities in violation of international instruments including the international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law (IHRL) and, in this respect, **strongly urges** all parties to

armed conflicts to immediately and unconditionally cease these violations and to strictly comply with IHL and IHRL;

2. **Notes with grave concern** that displaced children face lower promotion rates, slower progression and that repeated disruption of education in conflict settings risks converting early learning loss into permanent exclusion, which disproportionately impacts on girls, children with disabilities, separated/unaccompanied children, former child soldiers, and marginalized communities;

3. **Further notes with concern** the declining humanitarian financing, which is severely eroding the capacity for ensuring effective education in emergency situations, child protection, psychosocial support, and effective monitoring as needs escalate, exacerbated by climate shocks that intersect with conflict to drive repeated displacement;

4. **Underlines** the need for Member States to prioritize foundational learning, structured catch-up programs, and accelerated pathways to secondary education, recognizing that learning outcome recovery is as urgent as physical access to schooling;

5. **Further underlines** the need for further strengthening early warning systems at national, regional and continental levels and to integrate in related incidents in conflict situations, as well as to include the education index in early warning;

B. On the actions undertaken by the African Union following previous PSC decisions

6. **Welcomes** the adoption by the Executive Council in February 2025 of the Continental Education Strategy for Africa 2026–2035 and the Decade of Accelerated Action for Education Transformation and Skills Development in Africa 2025–2034, recognizing the strengthened continental architecture they provide;

7. **Welcomes** the appointment of H.E. Ambassador Jainaba Jagne as the AU Special Envoy on Children Affected by Armed Conflict and congratulates her on her appointment; and **emphasizes** the imperative of providing the office of the Special Envoy with the necessary financial, human and technical resources to enable her to effectively discharge her mandate;

8. **Welcomes** the launch of the Teachers' Forum aimed at promoting emergency planning for education in crisis situations;

9. **Welcomes** the continued commitment of AU partners to the implementation of the continental agenda on education in conflict situations and their support for the priorities of CESA 2026–2035; and the AUC efforts to mobilize them and **appeals** to the international development partners, including the United Nations system, Education Cannot Wait (ECW), and international financing institutions to support the mobilization of predictable, flexible, and pooled financing for education in conflict-affected settings across Africa;

C. On supporting education in conflict situations

10. **Encourages** Member States that have not yet endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration to do so, and calls on all Member States that have endorsed it to report annually to the AU Commission on implementation progress; and **calls upon** all Member States to translate the Safe Schools Declaration and its guidelines into national military doctrine, training programs, command directives, and operational practices without delay, ensuring all armed actors are bound by strict obligations to respect the civilian nature of schools;

11. **Urges** Member States that have not yet done so to sign, ratify, and transpose into domestic law the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, and the Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict;
12. **Encourages** Member States to mainstream educational continuity into national emergency preparedness and anticipatory action plans, ensuring safe, temporary, accelerated, and flexible learning arrangements (including low-technology and offline digital options) are activated from the onset of a crisis; and to establish cross-border educational continuity arrangements for refugee and internally displaced children, including mutual recognition of prior learning, portability of academic records, harmonization of curricula, and elimination of administrative and fee barriers;
13. **Encourages** Member States to systematically address teacher safety, deployment, remuneration, and psychosocial well-being as fundamental prerequisites for quality education continuity in conflict and post-conflict settings;
14. **Further encourages** Member States to integrate mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), school feeding, water and sanitation (WASH), and child protection referral pathways into education responses, addressing the unique barriers faced by vulnerable and marginalized groups;
15. **Urges** Member States to further strengthen early warning systems, risk assessment mechanisms, incident reporting, and early action protocols for attacks on education, ensuring all incidents are systematically investigated and prosecuted under applicable national and international law;
16. **Commends** refugee hosting Member States for their continued efforts to ensure access to education to refugees and urges the international community to discharge its global responsibility for the protection of refugees and provision of education; further commends the AU Commission and the PSC Subcommittee on Refugees, Displaced Persons and Humanitarian responses for their commitment to allocating USD 8.8 million to support education in emergencies in 19 concerned Member States, and also **commends**, in particular the Africa Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) for its commitment to support health facilities within schools in conflict settings;
17. **Reiterates** continued support for the Banjul Process and **encourages** the implementation of the Conclusions of the Process while looking forward to the successful organization of the next episode of the Process;
18. **Considers the** “implementation matrix” as part of the PSC working documents, in this regard, **takes note** of the implementation matrix developed following the 1296th PSC meeting, which translates Council decisions into 18 time-bound actions with designated lead institutions; and **stresses** the urgent need to address resource constraints and accelerate implementation, in close coordination with relevant AU organs and platforms, to ensure effective implementation of the decisions of Council and avoid overlapping initiatives, programs and decisions ;
19. **Requests** the AU Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), in its capacity as the AU development agency, to support the construction and rehabilitation of resilient school infrastructure in areas affected by armed conflict and natural disasters;
20. **Requests** the AU Commission, specifically, the Department of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (ESTI) to submit to the PSC, by December 2026, a progress report on the status of implementation of the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 2026–2035), specifically its component on education in conflict situations, along with the Action Plan for 2027 and the work of the Education in Emergencies thematic group;

21. **Requests** the AU Commission, in coordination with the ACERWC, to organize an advocacy meeting with Member States that have not yet signed or ratified relevant international and continental instruments, including the Safe Schools Declaration and the ACERWC, and the Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, with a view to securing their endorsement, full commitment, and implementation, and to report back to the PSC;
22. **Requests** the AU Commission, working in collaboration with UNICEF, to develop an emergency framework/plan to be shared with AU Member States to ensure the continuity of education, including in situations of conflict, natural disasters, and in camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees;
23. **Directs** the AU Commission, in coordination with the AU Special Envoy on CAAC, to integrate education protection benchmarks into the mandates, planning processes, conduct and discipline frameworks, and pre-deployment training of all AU Peace Support Operations (PSOs);
24. **Requests** the AU Commission to expedite the finalization of the Continental Policy on the Protection and Provision of Education during Conflict by relying on credible official data (pursuant to Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.1296 (2025)]), alongside the development of a comprehensive mapping of AU frameworks, strategies, and initiatives addressing education in conflict contexts, in accordance with the established framework;
25. **Requests** the AU Commission, based on documented sources and proven evidence, to develop and maintain a concise, disaggregated continental monitoring framework tracking attacks on schools, closures, military use, safe reopening, enrolment, retention, learning outcomes, and inclusion metrics;
26. **Endorses** the sustained engagement campaign of the AU Special Envoy on CAAC on the protection and continuity of education;
27. **Endorses** the following four priority pillars: **Protection, Continuity, Learning Recovery/Inclusion, and Financing/Accountability**, as AU assessment indicators of safeguarding education in conflict situations and **calls on** Member States to cooperate in formulating concrete, time-bound national commitments across these priorities;
28. **Supports** the ACERWC in institutionalizing the national reporting mechanism on children's education in situations of conflict; **calls upon** relevant RECs/RMs to integrate education protection into their regional peace, security, and early warning frameworks, reporting annually to the PSC through the AU Commission in coordination with ACERWC;
29. **Underscores** the importance of establishing a platform for members to share experiences, lessons and best practices in safeguarding education in conflict situations and **requests** the AU Commission to undertake necessary actions to centralize the contributions of Member States; and
30. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.