



unitar

United Nations Institute for Training and Research

REPORT ON THE HIGH-LEVEL SEMINAR ON PEACE AND SECURITY IN AFRICA

«Assisting Incoming African Members on the UN Security Council in Preparing to Address Peace and Security Issues on the Continent»

Algiers, 8 - 10 December 2013

I. Introduction

1. From 8 to 10 December 2013, the Government of Algeria, in collaboration with the African Union Commission and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), convened a *High Level Seminar on Peace and Security in Africa: Assisting Incoming African Members on the UN Security Council in Preparing to Address Peace and Security Issues on the Continent*. The Retreat was convened as part of the process of the implementation of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA).

II. Participation

2. The Retreat brought together Rwanda as one of the sitting African Members on the UN Security Council (UNSC), Chad and Nigeria as the two incoming African states on the UNSC, Gambia as the Chair of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) for the month of December 2013, and Algeria as the Host. The delegations were headed by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, and included representatives from the Permanent Missions in Addis Ababa and New York, as well as from capital cities (see attached Annex of participants).

3. The AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, accompanied by officers of the AU Commission, including AU Special Envoys and Representatives, AU and UN Experts, and officials from UNITAR, also participated in the Retreat.

III. Objective

4. The objective of the Retreat was to lay the foundation for an effective articulation, coordination and channeling of Africa's common positions on peace and security on the continent into the decision-making process of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), which has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security (see Concept Note, attached). The Retreat also provided an opportunity for induction of the newly elected African members of the UNSC into the working methods of the AU Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) and those of the UNSC, and for a discussion of their relations with both the AUPSC and the UNSC.

The Retreat benefited from detailed presentations, by AU Special Representatives and Envoys, on the working methods of the AU PSC and on those of the UNSC, as well as on



conflict situations and cross-cutting issues in Africa that are on the agenda of the UNSC.

IV. Presentations and Deliberations

5. Detailed presentations were made on the issues identified below, followed by extensive discussions:

- Working methods of the AU Peace and Security Council;
- Working methods of the UN Security Council;
- Lessons learned from 2013 in the context of African UNSC members and the UNSC decision making process;
- Relations with the African Group and the African members of the Security Council, as well as with the other members of the Security Council;
- Sahel/Mali;
- Somalia;
- Western Sahara;
- Central African Republic;
- Great Lakes Region;
- Darfur;
- Sudan/South Sudan;
- Counter-terrorism;
- International Justice and the International Criminal Court.

6. In the discussions, participants agreed that Africa, through the AU and the Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (RECs/RMs), needs to address effectively certain issues and challenges, in the spirit and context of the implementation and advancement of the African Peace and Security Architecture. The participants identified the following issues and challenges, which can be categorized into coordination, information and analysis, and the capacity of the AUPSC as an organ, and the AU Permanent Observer Mission to the UN in New York:

Coordination:

- i. Absence of a forum for interaction between members of the PSC and African members on the UNSC (A3ⁱ);
- ii. Absence of African co-penholders at the UNSC;
- iii. Lack of an African Caucus at the UNSC;
- iv. Inadequate coordination among African UNSC members, including lack of regular consultations and briefings;
- v. Lack of coordinators among the A3 to take responsibility, on a monthly basis, to present/promote Africa's positions within the UNSC;
- vi. Lack of effective coordination between the AU Headquarters and UN Special Representatives and UN offices in Africa;

- vii. Lack of focal points among the A3 on specific conflict files concerning Africa to upkeep information and institutional memory on a specific issue of interest to Africa;
- viii. Gaps in AUPSC/UNSC relations, including lack of follow-up/implementation of commitments made at annual joint AUPSC/UNSC consultative meetings on peace and security in Africa;
- ix. Lack of accountability mechanisms for the A3, once they are elected on an African ticket into the UNSC, to report back to Africa on their activities at the UNSC with respect to African common positions on peace and security issues on the continent.

Information and Analysis

- i. Absence of induction of newly elected African members of the UNSC;
- ii. Lack of adequate knowledge among the A3 of working methods of the AUPSC and the UNSC;
- iii. Gaps in information flow and coordination between the AUPSC and the A3 on one hand and the AUPSC, the A3 and their capitals on the other;
- iv. Lack of timely provision of necessary information to A3;
- v. Non-alignment of the AUPSC and UNSC monthly calendars.

Capacity

- i. Inadequate capacity/staffing, in some cases, in missions of A3
- ii. Inadequate human and financial resources within the AU Permanent Observer Mission to the UN in New York;
- iii. Lack of appropriate/adequate structure for the PSC Secretariat
- iv. Inadequate capacity/staffing at the AU Commission in Addis Ababa, to provide, in a timely manner, relevant inputs towards the AU Permanent Observer Mission to the UN, and by extension, to the A3;
- v. Inconsistent and partial implementation of outcomes of AUPSC retreats;
- vi. Weak commitment to the responsibilities and obligations associated with PSC membership;

V. Outcome

7. The Participants of the Retreat, after extensive deliberations on peace and security issues in Africa and mindful of the challenges identified within the context of enhancing the continent's effectiveness in contributing to the decision-making process of the

United Nations Security Council (UNSC), recognized the need for action in the immediate, medium and long term basis, to be implemented starting January 2014:

Regarding coordination

- Information sharing between member states represented in the AUPSC on one hand and, on the other, between the AUPSC and the Africa Group as a whole;
- Coordination between the AUPSC and the Africa Group in New York, in particular through the use of the existing Africa Group Advocacy Caucus on questions of peace and security in Africa in support of the A3;
- Working with the UNSC P5 to ensure that the A3 are given the status of co-penholders on African issues on the UNSC agenda;
- Establishment of an African UNSC Caucus of the A3, to develop common positions in UNSC debates and to advocate for AU positions;
- Establishment of a Troika of outgoing, sitting and incoming PSC Chairs, to ensure continuity in the regular interface with the UNSC and the A3;
- Regular video/teleconferencing between the PSC Troika and the A3 Caucus, to ensure information-sharing/exchange of views;
- The A3 Caucus to be supported by the AU Permanent Observer Mission to the UN as its Secretariat;
- Alignment of AUPSC/UNSC monthly calendars through the exchange of provisional monthly programme of work;
- Accountability framework on how the A3 pursue and defend Africa's interests in the UNSC during their membership.

Regarding information and analysis

- AU Commission to prepare quarterly analyses of the issues on the UNSC agenda, with detailed elaboration of the African position, as well as the action required by the A3;
- Quarterly briefings by the A3 to the PSC on the status of African issues on the UNSC agenda;
- Allocation of African peace and security files to specific A3 states;
- Development of communication capacity and strategy by the A3, and regular briefings to the press/media;

- The AU Commission to undertake a comprehensive lessons-learned exercise regarding the promotion and maintenance of peace and security on the continent, achievements, opportunities, challenges and the way forward;
- Appreciation by A3 of the demands associated with membership of UNSC and need for adequate capacity in terms of requisite human and material resources;
- Invitation of the A3 to meetings of the PSC on peace and security issues on the UNSC agenda;
- Inclusion of a section in the bi-annual Report of the Peace and Security Council on its Activities and the State of Peace and Security in Africa to sessions of the Assembly of the Union, on the activities of the A3.

Effective coordination between the PSC and the A3

8. In order to ensure effective coordination of efforts between PSC and the A3 on African peace and security issues in the UNSC process, the following mechanisms should be put in place:

i. Institutionalization of annual retreat for African members of the UN Security Council:

The participants agreed on the need to institutionalize this Retreat as an annual event to take place each December, immediately prior to the new states take up their positions on the UNSC:

- Following each election of African members into the UNSC, the PSC, with support from the AU Commission, will convene a retreat for the new A3. The Retreat should cover, among other issues, briefings by focal points and exchange of views on African peace and security issues in Africa, particularly those in the UNSC process;
- In addition to, and back-to-back with, the annual Retreat, the Commission, with the support of UNITAR and relevant think-tanks, should provide training to incoming A3 members on technical aspects, including lobbying, drafting of resolutions, negotiations, financial aspects of peacekeeping, etc;

ii. Involvement of RECs/RMs in consultations on peace and security issues in Africa:

- RECs/RMs should be involved in consultations and coordination process on matters of relevance to Africa featuring in the UNSC agenda. Accordingly, RECs/RMs should be invited to annual retreats on peace and security in Africa.

iii. Relationship between the A3 and Permanent and non-Permanent Members of UNSC:

- Consultations on Africa's inputs into the UNSC decision-making processes should be done in New York in the context of interactions between the A3 and permanent and other members of the UNSC;
- A strategy for regular consultations with non-permanent members on issues of interest to Africa should be put in place.

iv. Strengthening capacity of the AU Commission regarding peace and security issues at the UN Security Council:

The participants agreed on the need urgently to strengthen the capacity of the AU Commission to manage peace and security issues in the UNSC processes, including the provision of effective support to the A3, through:

- Enhancing the capacity of the Commission to provide technical support to the A3, through strengthening the peace and security capacity of the AU Permanent Observer Mission to the United Nations, including through the establishment of a dedicated Peace and Security Unit/Section in the Mission;
- Establishment of a capacity in the AUC Peace and Security Department in Addis Ababa effectively to service the AU Permanent Observer Mission, the Africa Group and the A3, including through the establishment of a dedicated and adequately staffed AU-UN Support Unit;
- Implementation of the conclusions of the Retreats on the AUPSC on working methods relating to enhancing the capacity of the AUPSC, as well stresses the need of effectively engaging the AUPSC Committee of Experts in the periodic/ monthly elaboration of issues that go into the monthly programme of work of the AUPSC.

v. Actions to be undertaken by the A3

Within the framework of the African Peace and Security Architecture:

- The A3 should champion the inclusion of issues/themes relevant to Africa in the agenda of the UNSC, e.g. conflict prevention, proliferation of small arms and light weapons, women and children in armed conflict, etc.;
- During their respective Presidencies of the UNSC, the A3 should focus attention on the implementation of the conclusions adopted in the annual joint consultative meetings between the PSC and the members of the UNSC, including issues such as the PSC/UNSC joint missions and other matters relevant to Africa;
- A3 should hold consultations with relevant stakeholders, including those that have developed strategic partnerships with the African Union, as well as groups of interest and regional groupings on issues of interest for peace and security in Africa;

- Appoint, on a monthly basis, a focal country among A3, responsible for the presentation of African issues to UNSC, as necessary and where applicable.

vi. Immediate actions to be taken:

The participants agreed that:

- The outcome of the Retreat shall be circulated to the Embassies of all AU Member States in Addis Ababa and in New York, as well as to all the African Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution.
- The outcomes of the meeting shall be fed into the upcoming retreat of the AU Executive Council in January 2014.
- The outcome of this Retreat shall be discussed by the PSC, meeting at Ministerial level, with the participation of the RECs/RMs and the A3.

VI. Vote of thanks

The participants thanked Algeria, under the leadership of H.E Mr. Abdelaziz Bouteflika, President of the Republic, for its contribution to the success of the first High Level Retreat and the excellent working conditions provided by its Government.

They welcomed the generous offer of Algeria to host future Retreats, and recommend that appropriate action be undertaken towards the institutionalization of this "Algiers process", including the holding of the 2014 Retreat in Algeria, and the acceptance of subsequent invitations from Nigeria and other AU Member States.

ⁱ ****A3 means the three African members of the UNSC***