

POLICY BRIEF

**2022 ELECTION OF
THE 15 MEMBERS OF THE PSC:
CONDUCT AND OUTCOME OF
THE ELECTIONS**

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2022 ELECTION OF THE 15 MEMBERS OF THE PSC: CONDUCT AND OUTCOME OF THE ELECTIONS

The election for the 15 members of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) was held on 3 February 2022 at the meeting of the 40th ordinary session of the Executive Council in line with its delegated power pursuant to Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.106 (VI) of the Sixth Ordinary Session of the Assembly. The outcome of the election is expected to be approved by the Assembly during its 35th ordinary session, scheduled to take place on 5-6 February. While providing update on the conduct and outcome of the election, this policy brief also highlights some of the dynamics that transpired during the election as well as priorities for the new PSC.

THE CANDIDATES

Twenty-two (22) member states submitted their candidature by the deadline of 15 January 2021 to compete for the 15 seats in the Council. The list of candidates was accordingly prepared on the basis of this submission.

But, in the run-up-to the election, Mauritius withdrew from the election while Burkina Faso was disqualified after the 24 January coup and its subsequent suspension from the AU at the 1062nd session of the PSC held on 31 January 2022. Accordingly, at the time of the election these countries did not feature on the ballot.

Eight (8) of the candidates are running for re-election into the PSC and all of these candidates for re-election are from Central, East and West Africa. The candidates from West Africa standing for reelection entered the election with clean slate and hence with little doubt of returning to the PSC.

As captured in our previous policy brief on the candidates for the election of the PSC, North and Southern Africa fielded equal number of candidates with the available seats allotted for the regions. These two regions are also the only regions that don't have candidates running for reelection.

On the other hand, East Africa (with its seven

candidates minus Mauritius) and Central Africa (with its five candidates) presented six more candidates than the combined six seats allocated to the two regions. As negotiation on list of candidates failed to yield result, these two regions entered the election process on 3 February with extra number of candidates.

THE ELECTION PROCESS

The election of PSC members is regulated by the PSC Protocol and the 'modalities for the election of members of the Peace and Security Council'. Accordingly, the Executive Council elects PSC members by secret ballot, and candidates shall receive two-third (2/3) majority vote among member states eligible to vote pursuant to the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Council. As per the modalities for election, the election starts with candidates for the three-year term and the election for two-year term follows thereafter. When the number of candidates submitted are equal to the seats allocated to the region, the balloting continues until each candidates meets the required threshold for membership. In the event that the candidate is not able to get the 2/3 majority at the third balloting, then the election shall be suspended to allow member states of the concerned region to engage in consultation. In a situation where there are more candidates than the allocated seats, the candidate with fewer votes shall withdraw after three rounds while the rest proceeds with next rounds of voting. However, if the candidate fails to garner the 2/3 majority vote balloting, the election will be suspended for consultation.

CONDUCT AND OUTCOME OF THE ELECTION

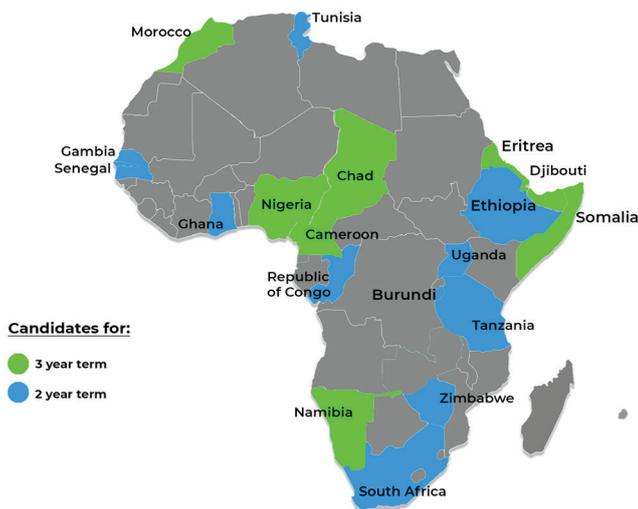
The elections were held in line with the PSC Protocol and the Modalities on the Elections of the PSC and the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Council. The conduct of the election followed the regional allocation of the seats of the PSC. According to the Modalities for the Election of Members of the PSC, the regional representation of the 15 members of the PSC is organized based on the five regions of the AU with the following distribution of the seats Central (3) East (3) North (2) South (3) and West (4).

At the time of the election, the Dean of the Southern Africa region informed the Council that following the withdrawal by Zambia of its Candidacy, Southern region sent a letter on 31 January informing the Office of the

Legal Counsel of the replacement of Zambia with Zimbabwe as the candidate for one of the two seats for the two-year term. With the Council exercising its authority on the inclusion of a new candidate after the deadline for submission of candidacy and in the light of the fact that not allowing new candidacy would lead to leaving the one seat allotted to the region vacant, Zimbabwe was put on the ballot for election.

Another change to the list of candidates that became apparent at the time of the election was the fact that from the Central Africa region one of the candidates for two-year term namely Equatorial Guinea was no longer a candidate and hence did not feature on the ballot. This means that at the time of balloting, there were only nineteen (19) candidates.

MAP 1: CANDIDATES AT THE TIME OF THE ELECTION



Since four countries namely Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali and Sudan were suspended from participation in AU activities, there were only 51 members states eligible to vote. The result of this is that the required 2/3rd majority for successful election is 34 votes or more.

ELECTION FOR THREE-YEAR TERM

In the election for the Central Africa region, Cameroon and Chad competed for the available one seat of three-year term. Following the failure of any one of the candidates to receive the required 2/3 majority during the three rounds of balloting, Chad was removed from the list on account of receiving least votes and Cameroon received 41 votes with 4 abstentions during the fourth round to be elected as the member of the PSC for three-year term.

For the East Africa region, none of the three candidates for the three-year term seat got the required number of votes during the first three rounds of balloting. After Somalia with the least votes was removed after the third round, it took three additional rounds for Djibouti, which received the most votes from round 1, to receive 35 votes and got elected to the PSC.

Morocco was the only candidate from the Northern Africa region for three-year term seat and it received 36 votes with 12 abstentions during the first round to be elected as the new member of the PSC.

For the Southern Region, Namibia was the only candidate for the three-year term seat and received 46 votes with one abstention, making it the only candidate that received the most votes from all those candidates for three-year term elected into the PSC.

For West Africa, Nigeria was the only candidate for the three-year term and it received 44 votes with one abstention in the first round and reelected to the PSC for three years starting from 1 April 2022.

TABLE 1: MEMBERS ELECTED FOR THREE-YEAR TERM

Region	Country	Votes received	Years of absence from the PSC
Central Africa	Cameroon	41	Re-elected
East Africa	Djibouti	35	Re-elected
North Africa	Morocco	36	2 years
Southern Africa	Namibia	46	6 years
West Africa	Nigeria	44	Re-elected

ELECTION FOR TWO-YEAR TERM

For the two-year term elections, the Central Africa region had only two candidates for the two seats, namely Burundi and Congo. The third candidate Equatorial Guinea did not feature on the ballot as it withdrew before the start of the election. Accordingly, the remaining two candidates were standing for election on clean slate for the two seats. Consequently, in the first round, Burundi got 40 and Congo 35 votes thereby being elected to the two-year term two seats for the Central region. This means that the Central region will have Burundi, Cameroon and Congo as members of the PSC.

In the next election for East Africa, after three rounds, Uganda received the required 34 votes and got elected. After the third round, with Ethiopia dropped for receiving the least votes, Tanzania was the only candidate. Thus, at

the fourth round, it received 43 votes with 2 abstentions to be elected for the two-year term of the PSC. This means that the East African region will have Djibouti, Tanzania and Uganda as members of the PSC in the newly reconstituted the PSC starting from 1 April 2022.

In the election for the North Region, Tunisia was the candidate standing on clean slate and it garnered 46 votes in the first round with 3 abstentions and got elected into the PSC. This means that the North region will have Morocco and Tunisia as members of the newly composed PSC starting from 1 April 2022.

For Southern Africa, the two candidates for two-year term were South Africa and Zimbabwe and South Africa 42 and Zimbabwe 38 with 4 abstentions in the first round thereby being elected into the PSC. This means that the Southern region has Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe as members of the newly reconstituted PSC starting from 1st April.

The election for West Africa, after the suspension of Burkina Faso, involved the remaining three candidates. In the first round of the election, the three candidates received the required majority votes as follows Gambia 46, Ghana 44, Senegal 39 and got elected to the PSC. The result of this is that from West Africa Gambia, Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal will be the members in the newly reconstituted PSC starting from 1 April 2022.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE NEW MEMBERSHIP OF THE PSC AND ISSUES FACING IT

The new composition of the PSC shows that six of the fifteen members of the newly reconstituted PSC that will start on 1 April 2022 are returning members of the PSC. This accordingly shows a level of continuity from the current PSC whose term ends on 31 March.

From the perspective of some of the challenges facing the PSC, notably, military coups, the new membership of the PSC seems to have members more inclined to uphold AU’s anti-coup norm. While this may not say much about whether the PSC will be more disposed to address the underlying factors precipitating coups such as manipulation of constitutional term limits, the new composition has better chance of firmly enforcing the norms against coups. Overall, while the new membership of the PSC seems to fare better on some counts of Article 5(2) requirements for membership notably those listed under sub paragraph (b) to (f) of the PSC protocol, in other respects it will be more of the same. This is crucial in avoiding some of the pitfalls that faced the current PSC in terms of its functioning as highlighted in the conclusions of the Mombasa retreat of the PSC.

MAP 2: NEW COMPOSITION OF THE PSC AS OF 1 APRIL 2022

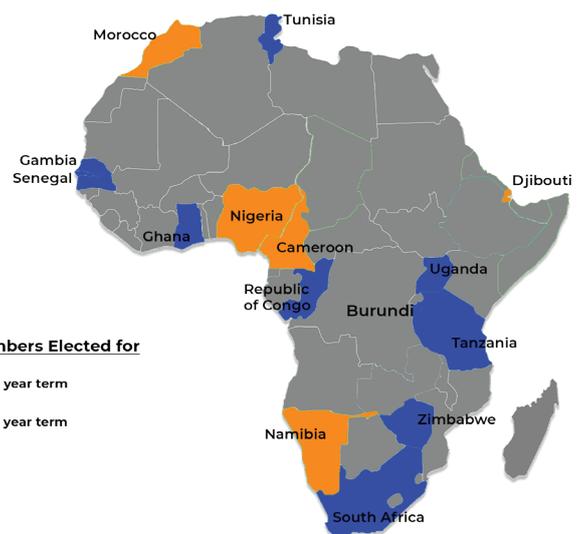


TABLE 2: MEMBERS ELECTED FOR TWO-YEAR TERM

Region	Country	Votes received	Years of absence from the PSC
Central Africa	Burundi	40	Re-elected
	Congo	35	3 years
East Africa	Uganda	34	4 years
	Tanzania	43	6 years
North Africa	Tunisia	46	12 years
Southern Africa	South Africa	42	4 years
	Zimbabwe	38	2 years
West Africa	The Gambia	46	6 years
	Ghana	44	Re-elected
	Senegal	39	Re-elected

TABLE 3: CANDIDATES WHO LOST THE ELECTION

Region	Country	Term
Central Africa	Chad	3 year
East Africa	Eritrea	3 year
	Somalia	3 year
	Ethiopia	2 year

The experience of the past year shows that the newly reconstituted membership of the PSC has to deal with both existing and emerging conflict/crisis situations. In 2022 and beyond, there are some nine issues that are expected to dominate the peace and security landscape of the continent and the agenda of the PSC.

The first of this is improving the effectiveness of the conflict management and resolution efforts aimed at dealing with existing conflicts, to avert further deterioration of the kind witnessed in 2020 and 2021. Second and related to this is the necessity for finding more effective ways of supporting transitions including those in Central African Republic, Libya and Somalia. Third, there is also the issue of addressing the challenges to responding to the mounting humanitarian consequences of conflict and crisis situations on the continent. Fourth, the deepening regression in democratic governance on the continent are leading to increasing peace and security challenges including in triggering military coups, mass protests and the compounding of existing security problems such as the escalating terrorism menace. Fifth, close to 20 countries are expected to hold presidential and parliamentary elections and some of these are expected to be sites of violent contestations producing instability. It is imperative that preventive measures are mobilized and deployed to avoid electoral disputes from leading to political instability and violence. Sixth, the spike in incidents of terrorist attacks and the expansion in the geographic scope of territories affected by terrorism in Africa mean that terrorism and the associated problems of organized crime will continue to dominate the agenda of the PSC in 2022 and beyond. This necessitates that the AU working with relevant regional organizations or mechanisms should initiate responses that go beyond a business-as-usual approach to the threat of terrorism and fundamental extremism. Seventh, the resurgence of military coups in Africa, with five coups in just over half a year unprecedented in recent years, and the apparent declining effectiveness of the anti-coup response tools of the AU and regional organizations will also be high on the agenda of the PSC. Eighth, in terms of strengthening AU's capacity for responding to crisis, the PSC is expected to sustain its strategic focus on achieving consensus on sustainable financing of AU-led peace operations through UN assessed contributions and the process for the full operationalization of the Peace Fund. Finally, as the continent bears the brunt of climate change including its impact on Africa's peace and security landscape, it is expected that the PSC keeps the issue of climate security high on its agenda, including for purpose of providing leadership in the consideration of this theme in the UN Security Council.

How the reconfiguration of the new membership of the PSC will affect the way the PSC operates and how

the new membership of the PSC will address these and other issues will determine whether the AU will mobilize more effective responses to the peace and security challenges of the continent and live up to the minimum expectations that arise from the PSC Protocol.

All the candidates elected into the PSC have served in the PSC at least once and as such there is no change from what obtained from the last election of the PSC to the number of States Parties that served the PSC. Tunisia and Morocco are the members that have served the least number whereas Nigeria remains a member of the PSC from the start with no interruption.

In light of the working methods challenges that the PSC experienced including in terms of the requirements of possession of diplomatic presence, the new composition is expected to perform better than the previous PSC. All the new members have presence in Addis Ababa with the majority having Defence Attachés.

TABLE 4: OUTGOING MEMBERS OF THE PSC

Region	Members with 2 year term	Members with 3 year term
Central Africa	Chad	
East Africa	Ethiopia	Kenya
North Africa	Egypt	Algeria
Southern Africa	Malawi * and Mozambique	Lesotho
West Africa	Benin	

* Malawi exited the PSC without having served as Chairperson of the PSC, in large part on account of the delay in the assignment of representation at Ambassadorial level.



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