

MONTHLY DIGEST ON THE AUPSC

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MONTHLY DIGEST ON THE AUPSC - JANUARY 2022

THE MONTH AT A GLANCE

In January, Ghana, under the leadership of Ambassador Amma A. Twum-Amoah, was the Chair of the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC).¹ Council's initial programme of work for the month envisaged four sessions. One more session than initially planned was added when the program of work was revised. Additionally, an emergency session was also convened to address the military coup which took place in Burkina Faso on 24 January, as an additional agenda item of one of the planned sessions. In total, the PSC held five sessions that addressed nine substantive agenda items.²

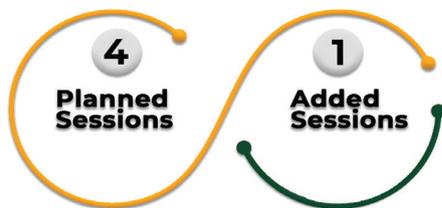


FIG 1: PROGRAMME OF WORK PATTERN

Of the nine items addressed, six focused on country/regional situations while the remaining three were dedicated to thematic issues. The regional coverage of country/region specific sessions was diverse during the month with situations in the West, East and Southern African regions having featured.



FIG 2: TYPE OF SESSIONS

¹ Ghana also joined the United Nations (UN) Security Council (UNSC) to serve as a non-permanent member for a two-year term, in January 2022.

² Four more agenda items were covered from what was envisaged in the original program of work. While initially the programme envisaged committing the 1057th session to the consideration of mandate renewal of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), the revised programme introduced the addition of an agenda item on the situation in Mali. On 25 January, the 1060th session was initially planned to address the situation in South Sudan only but as per the revised programme, the situation in Sudan was also addressed at that session. The session on Elections in Africa which constituted the 1062nd meeting was also introduced through the revised programme of work. As an additional agenda item to the 1062nd session, Council also deliberated on the deployment of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM) and convened an emergency session on the coup in Burkina Faso.

In terms of outcome document, all sessions led to the adoption of eight communiqués, while no publicly available outcome document was found at the time of publishing this monthly digest for the session dedicated to general debate on the PSC and A3+1. On average, it took about six days for the release of those outcome documents which have been made publicly available.

tWith the exception of the one ministerial session dedicated to the general debate on the PSC and A3+1, the remaining sessions were convened at ambassadorial level.

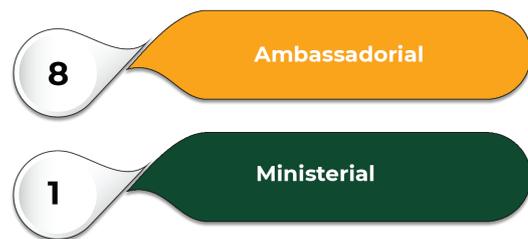


FIG 3: LEVEL OF SESSIONS

THE SITUATION IN MALI

Convened as one of the agenda items of Council's 1057th session held on 14 January, the situation in Mali was added to Council's revised agenda following the Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS)'s imposition of additional sanctions against Mali at its 4th Extraordinary session of 9 January 2022. The outcome of the session was adopted as a [Communiqué](#).

The key outcome of the session was Council's endorsement of the Communiqué of ECOWAS's 4th Extraordinary session. Although Council reached consensus in deciding to endorse ECOWAS's imposition of additional sanctions against Mali, a number of PSC member States raised concern about the economic implications of these sanctions on the larger population as well as the potential negative consequences on the diplomatic front.³

³ In addition to endorsing ECOWAS's Communiqué of the 4th Extraordinary session, Council also appealed to the UNSC to support the implementation of ECOWAS's decisions. It is to be recalled that through a meeting convened on 11 January 2022, the UNSC considered a draft Statement in support of endorsing ECOWAS's decision. Prepared by France, the Statement obtained votes in favour of its adoption from UK, US, the A3 and other members but its adoption was blocked by China and Russia. This has been a clear indication that competing interests of Russia and France in the country is a likely factor that will be dividing the UNSC's position regarding Mali.

In response to the new ECOWAS sanctions, the transitional government announced countermeasures including recall of ambassadors and closure of land and air borders with concerned ECOWAS member States.

To help reach a mutual agreement between Malian authorities and ECOWAS, Algeria extended on 11 January 2022, the offer to facilitate coordination between the two to address what the PSC communique called ‘outstanding areas of difference between.’ The offer was welcomed by the PSC at its session.

Despite the differences among member States of the Council regarding endorsement of ECOWAS’s decision, the 1057th PSC Communiqué has left no doubt regarding the Council’s rejection of Mali’s new transition calendar which aims to extend the transition period beyond the 18 months’ period agreed in the 2020 Transitional Charter. Specifying that the suggested new timeline for conducting elections (December 2025) sets the duration of the transition period to five years and half, Council strongly rejected the new transition calendar, referring to the time extension as “unconstitutional, impermissible, inappropriate and a grave obstruction to democratic processes in the country”.

At its Extraordinary Summit of 3 February 2022, ECOWAS requested Malian authorities to ‘propose an acceptable electoral timetable’ instead of urging them to abide by the previously established timeline or specifying an end date for the transition period. Similarly, the formulation of the PSC communique of its 1057th session show a shift from its 1001st session communique which urged Malian authorities to work towards conducting the elections by 27 February 2022 and to abide by the original transition period stipulated in the 2020 Transition Charter. It is however interesting to note that the communiqué of the PSC’s 1057th session on the one hand called on Malian authorities to conduct the elections within a ‘reasonable time agreed by all stakeholders’ and on the other hand urged Malian authorities to work towards return to constitutional order within a feasible period of time not exceeding 16 months.

While the PSC welcomed 45th session of the Monitoring Committee of the 2015 Algiers Agreement and the holding of the “National Refoundation Conference” in Mali, the insecurity in the country, particularly the

absence of State authority in central Mali⁴ was also emphasised as a matter of grave concern. This has been a particular challenge observed in the Mopti and Ségou regions of central Mali. The lack of State presence in these regions has resulted in the absence of basic social services.⁵ This in turn has urged the population in these areas to seek services elsewhere, opening the opportunity for armed non-State actors and self-defence groups to emerge as ‘protectors’ of the community by filling in government roles. The map below captures the various non-State actors and their regional spread, to demonstrate the extent of proliferation of armed groups across Mali.

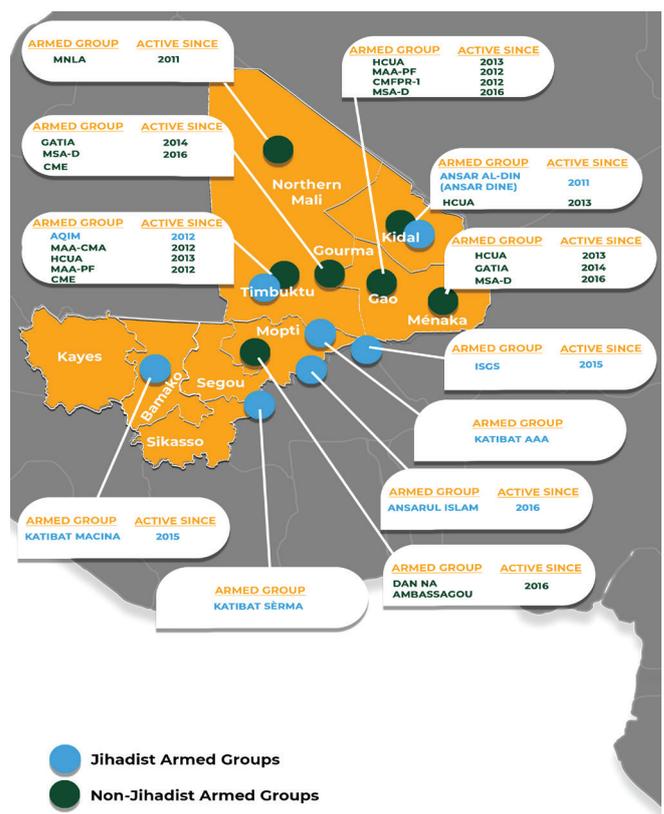


FIG 4: SPREAD OF ARMED GROUPS IN MALI⁶

⁴ Compared to 2012 when Mali’s crisis first broke out in the northern part of the country as a result of rebellions which developed into violent extremist insurgency, the geographic dynamics has changed considerably now, with the central part of the country facing as much insecurity and instability as northern Mali. This geographic spread of instability has been indicative of the need to re-evaluate the underlying root-causes of Mali’s crisis. While the spread of violent extremism and terrorist insurgency in the north has for long informed a response revolving around a counter-terrorist approach, the challenges in central Mali have indicated the need to address much entrenched socioeconomic and political issues which are further complicated by the level of insecurity that has gripped the country for years.

⁵ For instance, studies indicate that as of early 2020, the number of civil administrators present at their duty station in Mopti decreased to 27% from 30% recorded in November 2019. The impact of such absence in public administration in the area was also apparent from the lack of formal registration of births and deaths as well as official identity papers among significant parts of the population in the region.

⁶ Data in map obtained from Andrew Lebovich, Mapping Armed Groups in Mali and The Sahel, available on: https://ecfr.eu/special/sahel_mapping

In line with the Council's request to 'swiftly and directly' engage Mali's transition authorities, the AU Commission Chairperson held consultations on 26 January, with key Malian stakeholders including the interim President Assimi Goita and Prime Minister Choguel Maiga, to discuss AU's support to Mali in its quest for restoration of constitutional order. In addition to the Chairperson's direct engagement, the Council has also requested the AU Commission to conduct consultations with Mali's neighbouring countries and to present a report on the outcomes of the consultations. Another request made was for the Chairperson of the AU Commission to deploy a technical assessment team to Mali in order to identify areas of support for a speedy return to constitutional order.⁷ Council has not provided timeline for either one of these requests.

MNJTF ACTIVITIES AND MANDATE RENEWAL

The Council considered the Report of the Chairperson of the AU Commission on the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF) against Boko Haram as one of its two agenda items at its 1057th meeting convened on 14 January. This session was the Council's first substantive session of the year. The outcome of the session was adopted as a [Communiqué](#).

In addition to the Executive Secretary of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) and Commander of the MNJTF, representatives of ECOWAS and ECCAS have participated in the meeting on account of the transregional nature of the security threat posed by Boko Haram. The Council also considered and endorsed a report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the MNJTF⁸ which apparently informed the outcome document of the session.

⁷ It is to be recalled that the Commission, in collaboration with the AU Mission in Mali and the Sahel (MISHAEL) deployed a needs assessment mission from 20 to 25 September 2021, in line with PSC's guidance emphasised in the Communiqué of its 1001st session. This was in addition to the PSC evaluation mission to Mali which was conducted from 14 to 17 July 2021. These intense engagements demonstrate AU's dedication to resolving the constitutional crisis in Mali which continues to exacerbate the insecurity and instability the country has been immersed in for years.

⁸ The report highlights key developments since PSC's last session on MNJTF including the security outlook of the LCB region, support provided to the MNJTF, as well as challenges faced by the Force and recommendations on the way forward.

Main outcome of the session is the extension of MNJTF's mandate for another 12 months, effective from 1 February 2022. The Council has been renewing the mandate of the Force every year since its authorization of deployment on 29 January 2015.

Council welcomed the 'significant progress' made by MNJTF in the fight against Boko Haram. This is in light of the Force's successful operation against the terrorist group in its Area of Operation (AO) that led to the neutralization, arrest and surrender of significant number of fighters while pushing them out of all population centers, though they still operate in the Tumbuns enclave.⁹

Despite the achievements made by the MNJTF in degrading operational capability of Boko Haram, the Council stressed that the terrorist group still remains a threat to the region and the broader continent. As Improvised Explosives Device (IED) remains the modus operandi of choice to Boko Haram accounting for a significant portion of the military casualties¹⁰, the Council expressed its 'deep concern' over their continued uses within the MNJTF's AO and hence the request for the commission to explore options for effective response to this threat.

PSC welcomed the outcomes of the joint field assessment conducted in July 2021 and the Joint Steering Committee (involving the AU Commission, the LCBC Executive Secretariat, the MNJTF Troop Contributing Countries and the EU) meeting in August 2021, which recommended the continuation of support provided to the Force beyond 2021. The capability gaps of the Force remain more or less the same with previous lists for which the Council requested mobilization of support in previous session.¹¹ One notable difference, though, is the addition of Armoured Personnel Vehicles (APCs)/Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected (MPAPs). This can be perhaps attributed to the surge of attacks targeting security forces through the use of IEDs and other devices over the course of 2021.¹²

⁹ For more on the military successes of MNJTF against Boko Haram, see Amani's [Insights on the PSC](#) prepared for the 1057th session.

¹⁰ See the report of the Chairperson on MNJTF against Boko Haram terrorist group.

¹¹ The capability gaps noted in this session include Counter-Improvised Explosive Devices (C-IED) equipment, Amphibious Equipment, Surveillance equipment including military grade drones, field communication equipment.

¹² Early assessment on the dynamics after the death of Boko Haram's long-time leader in May 2021 and the ascendancy of its splinter group ISWAP indicates the spate of attacks targeting security forces, partly attributable to the

In relation to the support provided to the MNJTF, Council also expressed its gratitude to the EU that has been providing financial support to the Force since July 2016 through the African Peace Facility (ASF) and within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding and Support Implementation Agreement (SIA) signed between the AU, LCBC and MNJTF TCCs.¹³ EU's support for 2021 was 18.9 million Euros and this has slightly increased to 20 million for this year.

Regarding the humanitarian situation, beyond expressing its concern over the humanitarian crisis in the region, the Council also noted the role of the twin challenges of climate change and COVID-19 pandemic in exacerbating the humanitarian situation in the region. According to UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), as of January 2022, the violence has left 2.8 million internally displaced (2 million in Nigeria alone) and 265,000 fleeing as refugees while over 11 million people need humanitarian assistance in the region. It is in this context that the Council, once again, appealed to AU member states as well as the international community to 'redouble their humanitarian support to the affected communities'.

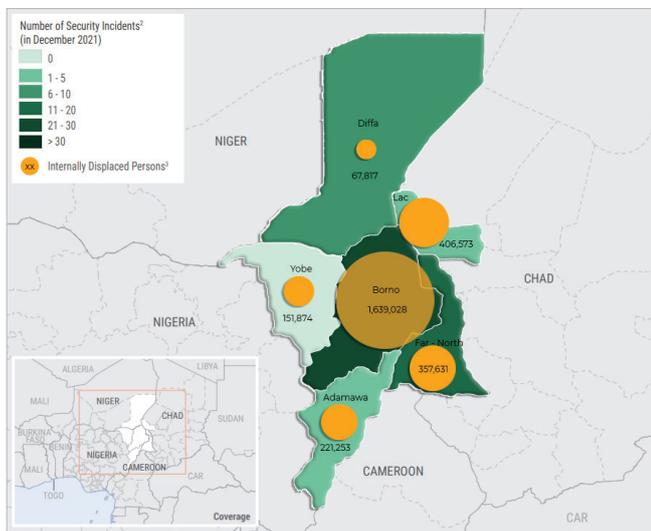


FIG 5: HUMANITARIAN SITUATION IN BOKO HARAM AFFECTED AREAS

[SOURCE: OCHA: LAKE CHAD BASIN HUMANITARIAN SNAPSHOT (17 JANUARY 2022)]

difference of strategy deployed by the two factions of Boko Haram. It is reported that JAS engages in indiscriminate killings of civilians while ISWAP focuses on targeting security forces instead of civilians.

¹³ The MoU was signed in late 2015 with the aim to streamline AU's additional support to the MNJTF while the SIA was signed later in 2016, as a supplementary agreement specifying the nature and modalities of the support provided to the Force by AU Commission.

While the session also highlighted the need for full implementation of the Regional Strategy for the Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience (RSS) of the Boko Haram affected Areas of the Lake Chad Basin Region, it also underscored the imperative of further institutionalizing the regional strategy through the implementation of the Territorial Action Plans (TAP). A major progress made over the course of 2021 in that regard is the development and official launch of the eight TAPs—comprising set of interventions and actions tailored to local needs of the eight affected territories—during the third Lake Chad Basin Governors Forum held in Cameroon in October last year.¹⁴

THE SITUATION IN SUDAN

At its 1060th session convened on 25 January 2022, the PSC considered the situation in Sudan in addition to South Sudan. The outcome of the session was adopted as a [Communique](#). The Special Representative of the Chairperson of the AU Commission, Mohamed Belaiche, was among the briefers. The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) was not part of the discussion despite the prevailing practice that relevant regional blocs participate in the meetings of the PSC on issues of interest to them.¹⁵

The discussion was based on the report presented by AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS), Bankole Adeoye, following his engagement with the Chairman of the Sovereign Council and other Sudanese political actors and stakeholders in mid-January.

Following the resignation of PM Hamdok on 2 January, the session noted the power vacuum created by Hamdok's resignation as the civilian component could not play the envisaged roles, duties and powers under the August 2019 constitutional declaration.

¹⁴ It is to be recalled that the Council dedicated its 1010th session to assess the implementation of the RSS for the first time since its inception in 2019, an encouraging step showing the focus on comprehensive app

roaches that move beyond military actions in addressing the multi-layered causes and implications of the insurgency in the region.

¹⁵ During the Council's 1041st session that saw the suspension of Sudan from AU activities, a representative from the Secretariat of IGAD participated but not the chair of the bloc, perhaps to avoid conflict of interest as the concerned country, Sudan, is current chair of the organization. IGAD did not take part in the subsequent two sessions of the PSC (1050th and 1060th sessions) that considered the situation in Sudan.

While, the Council also welcomed the appointment of 'Civilian Cabinet of Ministers' composed of technocrats on 12 January, it is worth to remain cautious that such step is not used by the military to delay the required speedy return to a constitutional order in line with the constitutional declaration.

In light of the continued violent crackdown against largely peaceful protesters which claimed the lives of many unarmed peacefully protesting civilians, the Council 'condemned the killing of innocent civilians and the violence that occurred during the ongoing political demonstrations in Sudan'. In this connection, the session reiterated the call made at its 1050th session to undertake a 'prompt, independent, transparent and effective investigation' into the alleged killings and abuses of protesters and hold all those responsible to account, although Sudan authorities made no progress.

One of the central issues addressed at this session was the role of the AU in facilitating a way out of the political stalemate and deepening crisis arising from the 25 October coup in Sudan. In apparent attempt to intensify its diplomatic engagement in resolving the crisis, the Council outlined several tasks for the Commission to undertake including the commission to 'propose a dialogue/mediation plan' (though no deadline has been set by the Council for its consideration), 'intensify engagements' with the sovereign council and other stakeholders, as well as conduct a 'follow-on mission to Sudan' with the view to consolidating efforts aimed at restoring peace and stability in the country.

The Council further mandated the Commission to 'establish a mechanism aimed at supporting Sudan and coordinate the international community's efforts, and ensure the full involvement of the AU in supporting Sudan'. Within this context, the Chairperson of the Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, accompanied by PAPS Commissioner Bankole, paid a three-days working visit to Sudan from 12-14 February 2022, although how this has advanced effective role of the AU and how it coordinates with the role of the UN remains unclear.

It is worth noting that this session came within the context of UN's launch of consultations on a political process for Sudan through the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan

(UNITAMS) on 8 January in line with its good offices mandate.¹⁶ The PSC noted the initiative at 1060th session, but it also stressed the need for the AU to 'coordinate the international efforts in Sudan'.¹⁷

Another key element of the session is the timeline it sets out for the conduct of election. The Council underscored the need for organizing 'free, fair and credible elections to elect a civilian-led government in the next six (6) to 12 months'. However, given that the 25 October coup and the crisis it triggered has derailed the transitional process, it is doubtful that this timeline is practical and has the support of local stakeholders. A case in point is the reported criticism levelled by Forces for Freedom and Change (one of the major pro-democracy groups that was part of the civilian component of the Sovereign Council) against part of the communique that puts timeframe for the election as 'dangerous' and 'unprecedented interference' in Sudanese affairs.

The field mission to Sudan, which the Council initially agreed to conduct from 27 to 28 February 2022, has been postponed pending the readiness of Sudan.

DEPLOYMENT OF SAMIM

At its 1062nd session held on 31 January 2022, the PSC discussed the deployment of the Southern African Development Community Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM). The outcome of the session was adopted as a [Communique](#). The representative of SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, the representative of EU Delegation to the AU and most notably Rwanda were among participants of the session.

One of the major outcomes of this session is the endorsement of SAMIM six months after its first

¹⁶ In a statement, dated on 28 February, on the release of UNITAMS summary report on its consultations for a political process for Sudan, the mission stated that it will be working 'side-by-side with [our] international and regional partners - particularly the African Union and IGAD - in the coming phase, to push the political process forward with the participation of all Sudanese actors in order to restore the path of civil and democratic transformation in Sudan'. It does not however clarify the modality in which these different international organizations work 'side-by-side'.

¹⁷ IGAD's delegation led by its Executive Secretary, Workneh Gebeyehu, undertook a fact-finding mission in Sudan from 29 January to 1 February 2022. Workneh briefed IGAD leaders about the outcome of his fact-finding mission on the sidelines of the AU Summit and leaders 'agreed to convene Summit of Heads of State and Governments on the situation within the coming weeks', according to his tweet on 6 February. Media sources indicate that such summit level meeting is envisaged to take place in March in Kampala, Uganda.

deployment in Mozambique in July 2021. It is to be recalled that the regional bloc mandated the mission within the framework of the African Standby Force (ASF) under scenario six to combat terrorism and acts of violent extremism, restore security and law and order in Cabo Delgado, and provide humanitarian relief. The Council further endorsed the 12 January 2022 communique of the extraordinary summit of SADC that extended SAMIM's deployment for three months (SADC's communique did not disclose the duration of mandate extension).

The Council focused on exploring ways and means of supporting the mission in materials, technical and financial resources. An immediately available option currently under consideration to address SAMIM's financial challenge is the use of European Peace and Facility's Early Response Mechanism (ERM), though this mechanism provides limited funding window for the first steps of actions aimed at preventing, managing and resolving crises. Therefore, one of the challenges for SADC to benefit from this funding has been aligning its demands with ERM's area of priorities as the latter strongly focuses on conflict prevention efforts such as mediation, shuttle diplomacy, deployment of human rights observers, fact-finding missions, and measures to prevent election related violence.

Most recently, the third ERM Steering Committee Meeting was convened in Nairobi, Kenya, in the week of 22 February.¹⁸ A major outcome of that meeting has been the rolling out of the third phase of the mechanism (ERM III), which will last for 48 months with a total budget of Euro 25 million.

The Council takes two important decisions to address SAMIM's logistical challenges. The first is to promptly provide SADC with the required equipment already identified at the Continental Logistics Base (CLB) in Douala, Cameroon, while the second is to deliver 'substantial additional equipment' from the second batch of military aid being donated by China to the AU directly to Mozambique.¹⁹ Both of these supports

¹⁸ The Steering Committee Meeting brought together ERM focal points and thematic experts from within the AU Commission, RECs/RMs and the EU to discuss lessons learned from the implementation of previous phases of the mechanism and increase the level of engagement among ERM stakeholders to further strengthen coordination.

¹⁹ It is to be recalled that the first batch of Chinese donation arrived at the Continental Logistics Base in July 2018 and the second batch is expected to happen soon though it was initially scheduled to arrive in July last year.

are non-lethal.

With respect to Rwanda's role,²⁰ the PSC welcomed its contribution of forces to complement Mozambique's counter terrorism efforts noting that the deployment is based on existing bilateral agreement between the two countries within the spirit of 'African solution to African problems'. Even more, the Council called on AU and partners to continue supporting the 'efforts of Rwanda in coordination with SAMIM in Mozambique'.²¹

Finally, the Council agreed to intensify engagements with Mozambique, SADC and SAMIM to enhance coordination and, in this respect, it requested the Commission and its SADC counterpart to provide regular updates to the Council on progresses made towards the implementation of SAMIM's mandate. Being current chair of the SADC Organ and as an incoming member of the PSC as of 1 April, South Africa would be best placed to bridge the gap between the Council and the regional bloc regarding the deployment of SAMIM.

THE SITUATION IN BURKINA FASO

The PSC considered the situation in Burkina Faso as an emergency case by making it one of the three agenda items considered by the Council during its 1062nd session convened on 31 January. The outcome of the session was adopted as a [Communique](#), which was released on the next day after the session.

The session was convened a week after a faction of military officers staged successful military coup against the democratically elected President Marc Roch Christian Kabore on 24 January. This is however despite the prevailing practice that the Council convenes an emergency session within a day or so after the happening of Unconstitutional Change of

²⁰ Rwanda's deployment was announced on 9 July 2021 while the regional bloc was due to dispatch troops on 15 July. It is to be recalled that Chairperson of the AU Commission issued a statement on 10 July commending 'Rwanda's deployment of 1000 RDF [Rwanda Defence Force] and Rwanda National Police members, to Cabo Delgado, at the request of the government of Mozambique, as a strong and concrete act of African solidarity to support a fellow Member State fight terrorism and insecurity'.

²¹ South African President Cyril Ramaphosa who is current chair of the SADC Organ for Politics, Defence and Security, is quoted about SADC's agreement to Rwanda's deployment saying 'it was done in full cooperation and partnership'. See the Africa Report, 'Ramaphosa: "Kagame wouldn't dream of deploying to SADC without consent"', 6 October 2021, <https://www.theafricareport.com/133690/ramaphosa-kagame-wouldnt-dream-of-deploying-to-sadc-without-consent/>

Government (UCG) in one of Member States. The delay can be perhaps explained in light of the recent emerging trend where the Council has showed the tendency of giving regional blocs, specifically ECOWAS, the space to take the lead in responding to UCGs happening in their jurisdiction.²² It is worth noting that PSC's session came only after the convening of an extraordinary summit of ECOWAS on 28 January to review the political developments in Burkina Faso in the wake of the 24 January coup.

One of the key outcome of this session is the suspension of Burkina Faso, with immediate effect, from all AU activities until the 'effective restoration of normal constitutional order in the country'.²³ The suspension resulted in the removal of Burkina Faso from the list of candidature for the 2022 election of the PSC members, which was held on 3 February at the meeting of the 40th ordinary session of the Executive Council.²⁴ The Council also endorsed the communique of the extraordinary summit of ECOWAS adopted on 28 January, which among others decided to suspend Burkina Faso from the regional bloc, and urged authorities to immediately release the President and other political detainees.

The Communique of ECOWAS also requested for the immediate restoration of constitutional order, but no timetable has been specified for the military authorities in Burkina Faso.²⁵ At its extraordinary summit held on 3 February, the bloc asked military authorities to 'establish the Transition institutions, adopt a transition calendar and facilitate the return to constitutional order within the **shortest time**'.²⁶ This is in marked contrast to its approach towards the situations in Guinea and Mali where ECOWAS

²² *In case of Mali, for instance, the Council put on hold its determination of whether unconstitutional change of government and the application of article 7(g) of the PSC protocol until ECOWAS adopts a decision. Similarly, the PSC did not adopt an outcome document for its 1028th session, which was convened to consider the situation in Guinea following the 5 September coup in that country. It was only after ECOWAS convened a session on 8 September and decided to suspend Guinea that the Council adopted a communique that saw Guinea's suspension from AU.*

²³ *The decision to suspend Burkina Faso from AU activities is in line with the relevant provisions of the AU Constitutive Act (Article 30), the PSC Protocol (Article 7(g)), and the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (Article 23), as well as the PSC's established practice.*

²⁴ *Burkina Faso was one of the countries that submitted its candidature for the two-year term seat at the PSC representing West Africa.*

²⁵ *A national conference in Burkina Faso has reportedly adopted a transitional charter that allows the military government a three-year transition.*

²⁶ *Communique adopted at the Extraordinary Summit of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government on the Political Situation in Burkina Faso, Guinea and Mali held in Accra, Ghana, on 3 February 2022 (emphasis added).*

prescribed six and 18 months of transitional period, respectively.²⁷ In recent times, duration of transitions has been at the heart of controversy between the regional bloc and its Member States that experienced coups.

There seems to be also a change of tack on the side of ECOWAS, as clearly observed in its latest extraordinary summit held on 3 February, where the regional bloc adopted a softened stance towards its previous demand for a strict compliance to prescribed timelines.²⁸

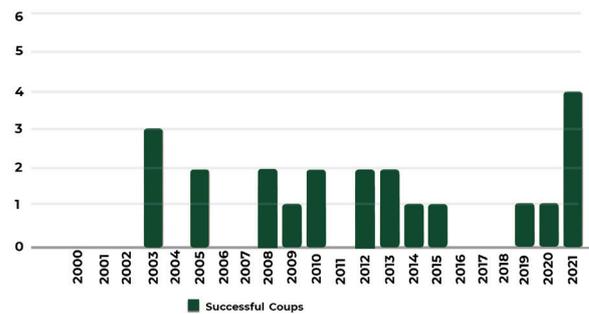


FIG 6: TREND OF COUPS IN AFRICA SINCE 2000

The Communique of the PSC also expressed its 'deep concern' over the 'resurgence of military coups d'état'. Over the course of nine months, the Council addressed five cases of unconstitutional change of government, which is unprecedented in the Council's 18 years of history. Although AU has developed anti-coup norms and applied those norms in largely consistent manner, the increasing tide of coups clearly reveals the limits of AU's existing normative instruments and practices. Accordingly, the PSC has tasked the Commission to undertake the following studies to address this worrying trend in a more strategic way:

1. At its 1030th session held on 30 September 2021 and as reiterated during its 1062nd session, the Council mandate the Commission to undertake a 'comprehensive and objective analysis of the root

²⁷ *Such timelines were not only declined by both countries but also triggered political tension particularly between ECOWAS and Mali after the former rolled out tougher sanction against Mali for failing to conduct the election in accordance with the agreed time framework.*

²⁸ *During its extraordinary summit convened on 3 February which considered the situation in Mali, Guinea and Burkina Faso, ECOWAS refrained from specifying duration for the transition in Burkina Faso, rather requested the military authorities to 'adopt a transition calendar and facilitate the return to constitutional order within the shortest time'. On Guinea, the Summit, instead of demanding its previously stipulated 6 month timeframe, it requested the transition authority to provide to ECOWAS 'an acceptable timetable for restoring constitutional order'. On Mali, the summit called for Malian authorities to 'urgently propose an acceptable electoral timetable to ECOWAS with a view to enabling the progressive lifting of the sanctions'.*

causes and impact of unconstitutional changes of government in the Continent'

2. The 8th High Level Seminar on Peace and Security in Africa held in Oran, Algeria in December 2021, recommended the review of the 'African Governance Architecture (AGA) and the Lomé Declaration on unconstitutional changes of government'.

3. Reiterating the above recommendation of the High-Level Seminar, the Council, at this session, stressed the need for the analytical review to cover existing AU instruments on democracy and good governance. The Council further puts a two-month deadline for the Commission to finalize and report the review, due end of March.

As deteriorating security situation (due to uptick of terrorist activity) coupled with weak state capacity is one of the factors behind the coup in Burkina Faso, the session welcomed the joint initiative by the Chairperson of the Commission and the UN Secretary General on the 'AU-UN Joint Strategic Assessment on sustainable financing of G5 Sahel Joint Force'.

THE SITUATION IN SOUTH SUDAN

One of the agenda items of the 1060th session convened on 25 January addressed the situation South Sudan. The outcome of the session was adopted in the form of a [Communiqué](#).

The session served to capture the status of implementation of the 2018 Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS), since Council's last session on South Sudan convened in April 2021, where the report of its field mission to the country conducted from 24 to 26 March 2021 was considered. On the political front, Council highlighted the need to expedite the reconstitution of the Judicial Reform Committee,²⁹ the State Assembly

²⁹ The establishment of an ad-hoc Judicial Reform Committee was part of the agreed steps with regards to revitalising the judiciary, in line with the 2018 R-ARCSS. The Committee is meant to serve the purpose of recommending appropriate judicial reforms to the government. Although the R-ARCSS set a timeline of three months (the first three months of the transitional period) for the formation of the Committee, its formation remains to be one of the critical pending tasks in the implementation of the R-ARCSS. In addition, the establishment of the three transitional justice mechanisms (Commission for Truth, Reconciliation and Healing, the Hybrid Court for South Sudan, and the Compensation and Reparation Authority) which constitutes Chapter V of the R-ARCSS is also still pending.

of Western Bahr el Ghazal, as well as national and local level commissions and institutions.³⁰

With regards to security related concerns, Council urged for the operationalisation of the Community Violence Reduction (CVR) programme. The CVR is an initiative instigated by the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and 'International Friends of South Sudan' aimed at enhancing existing DDR processes by employing a bottom-up approach which focuses on community reintegration, particularly the youth. The joint technical working group for the CVR/DDR scheme has already conducted its inaugural meeting on 10 December 2021. To assist with overall DDR and security sector reform (SSR) processes, Council has also requested the AU Commission to deploy necessary technical support. As far as SSR is concerned, South Sudan seems to continue experiencing challenges particularly in relation to reaching agreement on the command structure of the unified forces which is a prerequisite for their actual graduation.

Council mandated the AU Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) Centre to prioritise South Sudan among its areas of focus. In addition, it also requested the AU Commission to dispatch expeditiously a post-conflict needs assessment mission to South Sudan to help in identifying needed resources and areas of focus in rebuilding the country. No timeframe was set for the deployment of the mission however.

The Council addressed two key additional requests to the AU Commission. First was to coordinate a trilateral evaluation of the electoral and constitution-making needs of South Sudan in collaboration with Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and Office of the UN Secretary General and submit a report of the evaluation to Council within two months of the decision. The second request was for the Commission to work towards enforcing Article 3.2.8

³⁰ One of the main pending items in the implementation of the agreement noted at Council's field mission to South Sudan conducted from 24 to 26 March 2021 was finalising the establishment of the legislative branch of government. The formation of the Transitional National Legislative Assembly (TNLA) in addition to the full establishment of the executive branch of government was therefore a notable progress. However, the delay experienced in operationalising the TNLA has in turn delayed the completion of drafting key instruments including the constitutional bill and relevant electoral laws. With elections expected to take place in 2023, the delays in finalising these bills could possibly result in postponement. UNSC's [8987 Meeting](#), held on 7 March 2022 where it was briefed of the critical pending items in the implementation of R-ARCSS provides further insight as to why South Sudan might not be ready to conduct free, fair and credible elections by the pre-determined time.

of Chapter III of the R-ARCSS,³¹ through consultations with the UN Secretary General and IGAD Executive Secretary.

Another key decision emanating from the 1060th session on South Sudan was Council's undertaking to conduct a field mission to the country. Accordingly, Council visited South Sudan under Kenya's chairship from 22 to 25 February 2022, where it engaged with key stakeholders regarding critical political, economic, security and humanitarian concerns. The visit took place when concerns are growing over the slow pace of implementation of the Revitalized peace agreement and growing tensions among the parties to the peace agreement.

PROMOTING CONSTITUTIONALISM, DEMOCRACY AND INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE TO STRENGTHEN PEACE, SECURITY AND STABILITY IN AFRICA

This constituted Council's 1061st session convened on 27 January. The outcome of the session was adopted as a [Communiqué](#).

As implied in the Communiqué, the session was convened in response to the resurgence of unconstitutional change of government (UCG) in the continent, particularly witnessed throughout 2021 and into early 2022.³² The session also served to

³¹ Article 3.2.8 of the R-ARCSS provides for the Chairperson of the AU Commission, Chairperson of IGAD and the UN Secretary General to convene a South Sudan Pledging Conference within nine months of the establishment of the Special Reconstruction Fund (SRF) and formation of the Board of Special Reconstruction Fund (BSRF). According to the R-ARCSS, the SRF was meant to be established within the first month of the transition and to be administered by a board (the BSRF) comprising members from the Revitalised Transitional Government of National Unity (RTGoNU), friends of South Sudan and international partners. As was elaborated by Maj. Gen. Charles Tai Gituai, Interim Chairperson of Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (RJMEC) at the 21st plenary meeting of RJMEC held on 10 February 2022, the establishment of the SRF constitutes one of the pending items in the implementation of R-ARCSS. Council's request for the AU Commission to trigger consultation with IGAD and UN Secretary General on organising a pledging conference therefore seems to come well ahead of the formation of the SRF – which has been much delayed.

³² The issue of UCG was also among the issues which took centre stage at the 35th session of the AU Assembly. In his presentation to the Assembly, the PAPS Commissioner, Bankole Adeoye drew attention to the "domino-effect" of UCG highlighting the successful coups staged in Guinea, Mali, and Sudan in 2021 and

follow up on the governance related decisions of the Eight High-Level Seminar on Peace and Security in Africa convened in December 2021 in Oran, Algeria. Accordingly, the AU Commission was requested to undertake an exhaustive analysis of the 2000 Lomé Declaration on UCG and the African Governance Architecture (AGA) and report back to the PSC on the findings relating to the responsiveness of these frameworks to current challenges in the continent.

In addition to the AGA and AU normative frameworks on democratic governance and constitutionalism, the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) is also an instrumental tool to promote and advance good governance in the continent. Council highlighted the importance of the APRM as a mechanism to support member States in their efforts to build democracy and avert constitution related crises.

A key decision adopted at the session was Council's request for the AU Commission to reactivate the PSC Sub-Committee on Sanctions.³³ Another important decision adopted at the session was to convene a brainstorming session of the PSC and other relevant stakeholders on UCG, through the leadership of Ghana. There was no timeline provided with regards to the reactivation of the Sanctions Sub-Committee. The brainstorming session on UCG is to be conducted during the third week of March 2022.

CONSIDERATION OF THE AU COMMISSION CHAIRPERSON REPORT ON ELECTIONS HELD IN AFRICA

The consideration of AU Commission Chairperson's report on elections in Africa conducted during the second half of 2021 constituted one of the agenda items of Council's 1062nd session convened on 31 January. The outcome of the session was adopted as a [Communiqué](#).

Burkina Faso in January 2022, as well as the attempted coup in Guinea Bissau in January 2022. This trend of a chain reaction has been observed particularly in the case of western Africa.

³³ It is to be recalled that following the Council's decision at its 178th session to establish a Sub-Committee on Sanctions in line with Art.8(5) of the PSC Protocol, the nature, mandate and composition of the Sanctions Sub-Committee were elaborated through the Ezulwini Framework of December 2009. Subsequently, the PSC has also highlighted the need to reactivate the processes for the establishment of the Sanctions Sub-Committee – along with other Sub-Committees which are also yet to be activated – at various occasions, notably at its Kigali Retreat of 2017.

As captured in the AU Chairperson's report, AU member States which conducted elections in the second half of 2021 (July to December 2021) included Cape Verde, Central African Republic (CAR), Ethiopia, Gambia, Morocco, Sao Tome and Principe, Somalia³⁴ and Zambia. The report follows the mid-year Chairperson's report on elections that was considered during Council's 1034th session covering the period between January and June 2021.

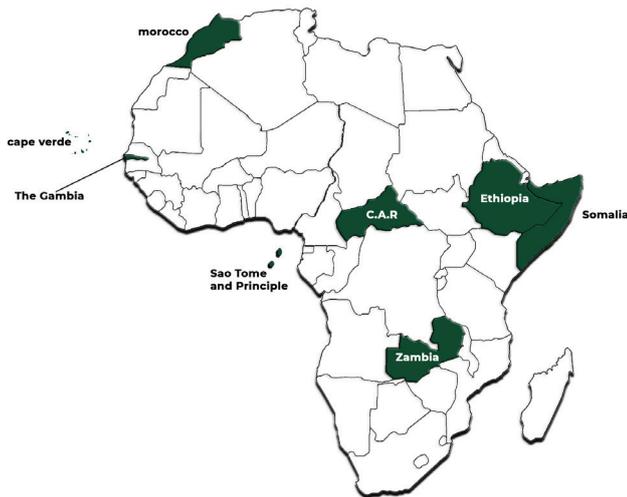


FIG 7: ELECTIONS IN AFRICA CONDUCTED FROM JULY TO DECEMBER 2021

Council drew attention to the importance of full national ownership of electoral processes by specifically commending those member States that were able to organise their elections through domestic funds.

With regards to those member States that will be organising upcoming elections, Council made a call for creating peaceful, transparent, inclusive and credible conditions. It also stressed the need to ensure protection of voters from exposure to Covid-19 and urged member States to use guidance of the 'AU Guidelines on Elections in Africa in the context of COVID-19 pandemic and other Public Health Emergencies'. It is to be recalled that the Guidelines referred by Council were first tabled for its consideration at its 976th session where it decided for member States to review the Guidelines and provide their inputs before they can be submitted to the

³⁴ As indicated in the Chairperson's report, Somalia was able to complete the election of Upper House members of Parliament while the election of lower house members was still pending at the time of consideration of the report. It is to be recalled that on 9 January 2022, Somali leaders reached an agreement to complete the election of lower house members by 25 February. Pointing out funding shortage and insecurity, the leaders have yet again postponed the timeline for completing the elections, with the new deadline being 15 March.

Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC).³⁵

Compared to the first half of the year, various trends have emerged or featured more prominently as outlined in the Chairperson's report. Particularly issues related to the resurgence of unconstitutional changes of government and fragile political transitions have been highlighted as key trends. Moreover, certain trends that were witnessed during the reporting period include the increased level of voter turnout, although this also needs to be contextualized within the overall challenge of voter apathy that continues to feature in electoral processes.

In the communique, the PSC in addition to its regular request to remain periodically updated on elections conducted in the continent, it addressed two new requests to the AU Commission. The first one relates to the documentation and utilisation of experiences of election management bodies. In the spirit of enhancing electoral process of member States, the AU Commission was requested to organise an annual forum which would serve as a platform for election management bodies to share experiences and lessons learned. Another request addressed to the Commission was to ensure that the targets set by the AU on gender parity and youth empowerment are met by scaling up participation of women and youth in AU Election Observer Missions (AEOM).³⁶

OTHER PSC ACTIVITIES DURING THE MONTH

In preparation for the presentation of the Council's Report on its Activities and the State of Peace and Security in Africa, which is annually submitted to the AU Assembly, the PSC Committee of Experts (CoE) convened twice during the month. The report was presented at the 35th Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly conducted from 5 to 6 February.

³⁵ Although the request for developing the Guidelines came from both the PSC and PRC, the PSC has requested for the Guidelines through the PRC. This is perhaps one area that needs follow up also given that the relevance of the guideline is highly related to its timely adoption and operationalization. It's a preparedness tool which beyond COVID19 encompasses broader emergency situations and hence it needs timely follow up.

³⁶ As captured in the Chairperson's report, a disparately low participation of women and youth as candidates in elections has been one of the trends observed in elections conducted during 2021. Scaling up women and youth participation in AEOM could be a significant way of encouraging their engagement at the national level.



MEDIA AND RESEARCH SERVICES

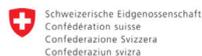
ABOUT AMANI AFRICA

Amani Africa is an independent African based policy research; training and consulting think tank with a specialization and primary focus on African multilateral policy processes, particularly those relating to the African Union.

We support the pan-African dream of peaceful, prosperous and integrated Africa through research, training, strategic communications, technical advisory services, and convening and facilitation.

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ADDRESS

On the Corner of Equatorial Guinea St. and ECA Road,
Zequala Complex, 7th Floor, Addis Ababa
Tel: +251118678809
Mobile: +251944723204 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia