

# **MONTHLY DIGEST ON THE AUPSC**

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**AMANI AFRICA**

Media and Research Services

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## MONTHLY DIGEST ON THE AUPSC - OCTOBER 2021

### THE MONTH AT A GLANCE

In October, Mozambique chaired the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC). In total, nine sessions were convened during the month. While the initial programme of work for the month envisaged seven substantive sessions, there were changes introduced in the course of the month. These changes entailed the postponement of one of the sessions and the addition of two new sessions to the original programme.<sup>1</sup>

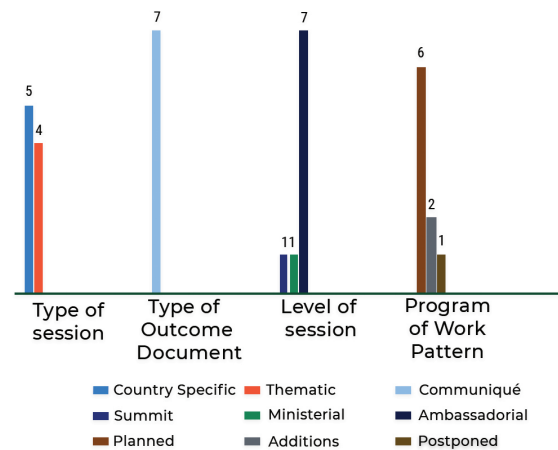
Five of the substantive sessions addressed country specific conflict/crisis situations whereas the remaining four were focused on thematic issues. In terms of regional coverage, 80% of the country specific sessions and 44% of the total sessions convened during the month addressed situations in the east and horn region while west Africa also featured in Council's agenda for the month. All the sessions during the month except two were held at the level of Permanent Representatives of PSC member States. There was one session held at a ministerial level and another one at the level of Heads of State and Government.

There is no outcome document by way of PSC product in terms of statement or communiqué for two of the sessions.<sup>2</sup> During October, it took about 10 days on average for the outcome documents to be published after the convening of each session. All released outcome documents were adopted as Communiqués (none adopted as Press Statement).

<sup>1</sup> The Commemoration of UNSC Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security which was planned to take place on 26 October was postponed and took place on 29 November. One of the additional sessions was an emergency session on the situation in Sudan, convened following the military coup of 25 October. The other additional session was a second update within the month on the situation in Somalia.

<sup>2</sup> The first session without outcome document was on 'Strategic Priorities for the utilization of the AU Peace Fund and the consideration of the Zero Draft African Consensus Paper on the Financing of AU-led Peace Support Operations using UN assessed contributions', convened on 5 October, and the other one was on 'Assessment of implementation of the PSC Work Plans 2020-2021: Achievements, Challenges and Way forward' convened on 19 October.

### October 2021 Substantive Sessions



### THE SITUATION IN GUINEA

The first session of the month, convened on 5 October, was Council's 1036<sup>th</sup> meeting. The outcome of the session was made publicly available as a [Communiqué](#) six days after convening.

The communiqué reiterated and upheld the decisions of 1030<sup>th</sup> session of the Council which saw Guinea suspended from participating in all AU activities until the restoration of constitutional order. In terms of new elements, the Council, fully endorsed the 16 September Communiqué of the Extraordinary Session of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) with particular reference to paragraph 9 of ECOWAS's Communiqué which envisaged the imposition of travel bans and asset freezes against members of the National Rallying Committee for Development (CNRD). Guinea's Transitional Charter adopted through the leading role of the military not only grants excess power to the CNRD and its head as well as the leader of the 5 September coup, Col. Mamady Doumbaya, but also fails to specify the duration of the transitional period, while ECOWAS's decision under paragraph 9 of its Communiqué of 16 September specified that elections shall be conducted in six months.

## SITUATION IN SOMALIA

PSC's session on 7 October was on the situation in Somalia and the status of consultations on the Independent Assessment (IA) Report on AMISOM Post-2021. The outcome of this 1037<sup>th</sup> was adopted as a [Communiqué](#).

The Minister of Defence of the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS), Hassan Hussein Haji participated at this session, indicating the level of importance the FGS attaches to the current PSC consultations on form AMISOM's presence takes post-2021.

There has been intense engagement on this agenda during the past several months. The PSC held three meetings between May and August 2021. At the time the PSC held its meeting in August, Somalia made it clear that it did not support the proposal of the AU IA Team for the establishment of an AU-UN Multidimensional Stabilization Support to Somalia as the most preferred option. On 17 and 18 August, the AU Commission also sent a technical mission, led by Fiona Lortan, Acting Director Conflict Management Directorate of PAPS, to Mogadishu to discuss with the Government of Somalia on the form of the presence of AU mission in Somalia in 2022.

The mission ended with the adoption of a joint-statement expressing the agreement of the Government and AU, for the development of a Concept of Operations (CONOPS) which could provide a workable and realisable structure for the future operation of AMISOM, which was also agreed to be regarded as an "AU Transition Mission" post 2021.

The major highlight of the PSC's 1037<sup>th</sup> session was the endorsement of option one of the "Report on the African Union's Engagement in and With Somalia Post-2021", submitted by the IA Team and considered by Council at its 1015<sup>th</sup> session. The PSC accordingly tasked the AU commission to initiate measures including consultations on the modalities for transitioning to an 'AU-UN Multidimensional Stabilization Mission in Somalia,' the most preferred option for AMISOM TCCs. The PSC made such a decision after expressing concern about the delays in the negotiations of the post-2021 AU engagement in Somalia, a delay the PSC considered as putting in 'jeopardy the efforts to secure a comprehensive

agreement on all aspects related to the follow-on mission post-2021.'

It is to be recalled that at a meeting of a joint-steering committee of the AU Commission and FGS held in mid-September, a zero draft of the CONOPS was initiated to outline the overall architecture and mandates of the AU Transition Mission. The zero-draft was to be reviewed and submitted to the PSC and finally the UNSC by 31 October. The CONOPS were not finalised due to delays in the negotiations regarding the nature and mandate of the post-2021 AMISOM.

Not surprisingly, shortly after the release of PSC's Communiqué endorsing option one, the FGS issued a statement expressing its complete rejection of the proposed hybrid mission, stressing that it fails to take account of Somalia's position on the issue.

In the face of the lack of progress to achieve agreement on the form that the post-December 2021 mission in Somalia will take and to avoid legal and political uncertainty about AMISOM after 31 December 2021, the communiqué of the 1037<sup>th</sup> session of the PSC appealed for the UNSC to consider technical roll-over of AMISOM's mandate as engagements on its transition post-2021 continue. Accordingly, UNSC's Resolution 2614 (2021) adopted on 21 December has granted a mandate roll-over for AMISOM, for three months which will last until 31 March 2021. The coming three months of 2022 will therefore signify intense negotiations regarding AMISOM's future nature and mandate.

Another key point emphasised in connection with AMISOM and an important takeaway from the 1037<sup>th</sup> session was Council's indication that whatever form it takes, a future AMISOM should play a multidimensional role that goes beyond responding to hard security challenges.

The growing political dispute between the President and the Prime Minister of Somalia was another area of concern highlighted by Council. As captured well in the Communiqué, the political dispute between the two entails further challenges not only to the completion of negotiations regarding AMISOM's post-2021 engagement, but also to the successful completion

of the elections which have already been repeatedly postponed intensifying tensions between the FGS and federal member states (FMS). While the election of the upper house members was finally conducted after postponements to the original timeline, the election of lower house members, who will eventually determine the presidency, is yet to be finalised. The existing political tension between the leaders stalls further the country's already fragile transitional process.

At the time of finalizing this digest at the end of December 2021, the tension between the President and the Prime Minister became critical with the President announcing the removal of the Prime Minister, triggering constitutional crisis and military confrontation.

## CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT OF THE TECHNICAL EARLY RESPONSE MISSION TO THE COMOROS

On 19 October, Council convened its 1039<sup>th</sup> session to consider the report of the Technical Early Response Mission (TERM) to The Comoros. The outcome of the session was adopted as a [Communiqué](#).

It is to be recalled that at its 1001<sup>st</sup> session, Council, after reviewing the political tension and associated security challenges in Comoros, tasked the AU Commission to dispatch the TERM to assess the facts on the ground through engagement with all concerned stakeholders. This 1039<sup>th</sup> session was convened to consider the report of the TERM, which undertook its mission to Comoros from 12 to 15 September, headed by Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS).

As highlighted in the Communiqué of Council's 1039<sup>th</sup> session, a major progressive step taken by the Comorian government has been the initiation and facilitation of an inclusive national dialogue. It is to be recalled that the main political contentions in Comoros started with the 2018 amendment of the 2001 Constitution, which

allowed a rotating presidential system whereby power alternates every five years among the three islands which make up the Union of Comoros. Through a referendum conducted in 2018 which was boycotted by oppositions, President Azali Assoumani's government adopted a new constitution which removed the rotation system. Since then, political tensions have been growing between oppositions and the incumbent president. As noted by the PSC, it is therefore important for the government initiated national dialogue to work towards regaining the opposition's trust so as to ensure the country's multi-party democracy is not further eroded.

Underscoring the need for AU's sustained engagement, Council mandated the AU Commission Chairperson to continue providing support to Comoros in the facilitation of the national dialogue as well as the organisation of the 2024 elections, through the auspices of the Special Representative for Madagascar and The Comoros. Council also decided to deploy an "AU multi-dimensional mission" to provide technical support to Comoros in the areas of mediation, security sector reform (SSR) and the process for the 2024 elections. The mission is envisaged to be deployed through the AU Commission. As implied in the Communiqué, the deployment of the mission also falls within the framework of activities approved for utilisation of the AU Peace Fund. There was however no indication regarding when the mission would be deployed.

It is worth noting that Council also decided to conduct a field visit to Comoros to engage the parties although no timeline was specified for that as well.

## CONTINENTAL EFFORTS IN PREVENTING AND COMBATING TERRORISM AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM IN AFRICA

In the session held at the ministerial level, the AU Commission Chairperson's report on efforts to counter terrorism in Africa was considered on 22 October. The session marked Council's 1040<sup>th</sup> meeting and its outcome was adopted as a [Communiqué](#) which was published

two weeks after the session.

The Chairperson's report elaborated the rising rate of terrorist insurgency and the prevalence of extremist ideologies in Africa. Increasing influx of foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs), rising rate of financing for terrorism and growing linkage between transnational organised crimes and terrorism are among the factors which are fuelling terrorism in the continent. In addition to carrying out terrorist attacks in multiple parts of Africa, terrorists have also growingly adopted other means of terror over recent years including kidnappings for ransom (KFR), sexual abuse against women and children and targeting of peacekeepers as reflected in the Chairperson's report.

The contribution of FTF to the spread of terrorism in the continent being an issue of great concern, the signing of a plan of action for the withdrawal of FTF from Libya was welcomed by Council. While UNSC Resolution 2570/202 as well as the conclusions of the two Conferences of Berlin on Libya call for the immediate withdrawal of foreign fighters from Libya, the withdrawal of these forces imposes serious risk on the security of the continent if not properly managed. It is to be recalled that this concern was addressed at Council's 1035<sup>th</sup> session where it called on the AU and UN to collaborate with neighbouring States of Libya and design a plan for the withdrawal of foreign forces and mercenaries from the country.

The plan of action was finalised and signed on 8 October 2021, following a three days meeting convened in Geneva among the military representatives from the Government and opposition military forces, also known as the 5+5 Libyan Joint Military Commission (JMC). The action plan provides the structure for a "gradual, balanced, and sequenced" withdrawal of foreign forces and mercenaries from Libya.

The outcomes of the High-Level Meeting on Combating Terrorist Financing in Africa held in Algiers from 9 to 10 April 2018 were also mentioned by Council with the purpose of urging the AU Commission and member States to expedite their implementation. Flowing from this meeting, the communique of the 1040<sup>th</sup> session emphasized the need for member States to take coordinated measures that would deprive terrorists of their sources of funding, including payment of ransom,

illicit trafficking, as well as any form of military, logistical or political support. This would also go hand in hand with Council's repeated call for the establishment of a database of persons and entities associated with terrorism including through funding of terrorist organisations, which the PSC reiterated in its communiqué.

Having regard to the contribution that the proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) makes to the spread of terrorism, Council also called on member States to enact laws and regulations on the control of "production, export, import, transit or retransfers" of SALW. In addition, the AU Commission was requested to conduct a second phase of "Mapping Illicit Small Arms Flows in Africa". It is to be recalled that the first phase of the mapping study was conducted in 2019 and provided data and analysis relating to the extent and nature of illicit small arms proliferation across Africa. The findings and recommendations of the mapping study were considered and endorsed by the PSC at its 860<sup>th</sup> session. The second phase of the mapping, as emphasised by Council, is to focus on the link between illicit arms flow and terrorism in the continent.

The request in the communiqué for the AU Commission to assist member States in their counter-improvised explosive devices (IED) capacities was also reflective and forms part of the overall attention the PSC has placed on the growing need to better capacitate member States in their fight against counterterrorism. For example, at its 973<sup>rd</sup> and 975<sup>th</sup> sessions convened in January 2021, Council has indicated the increasing sophistication in terrorist activities and the related need to ensure States are enabled to avert such threats.

Recalling major decisions made by the AU in relation to countering terrorism, Council also made a call on the AU Commission to ensure the implementation of these decisions before the end of 2021. These specific decisions are provided under paragraph 14 of the Communiqué. The decisions reiterated under paragraph 14, particularly the operationalisation of an African Arrest Warrant for those accused or convicted of terrorist acts, the development of an African list/database of terrorists, and the activation of a PSC Sub-Committee on Counter-Terrorism were adopted as far as a decade back, at the 249<sup>th</sup> session of the PSC convened in 2010. Although some steps have been

undertaken to operationalise the Sub-Committee on Counter-Terrorism including the approval of its mandate, functions and composition (see PSC's decisions of its 311<sup>th</sup> and 341<sup>st</sup> meetings), it is yet to be fully activated to undertake its activities.

Another request made by Council was for the AU Commission to expedite the establishment of an African Counter-Terrorism Coordination Task Force (A2CTF). As a relevant upcoming initiative, the AU Ministerial Conference to be hosted by Algeria for examining new African Plan of Action on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism and Violent Extremism was also welcomed.<sup>3</sup>

## EMERGENCY SESSION ON THE SITUATION IN SUDAN

On 26 October, Council convened its 1041<sup>st</sup> session to address the military coup of 25 October that took place in Sudan. The outcome of the session was adopted as a [Communiqué](#) and was published almost immediately after the session, which was concluded on 27 October.

The PSC was almost prophetic in stating that the military takeover in Sudan and the dissolution of the Transitional Government Headed by Prime Minister Abdela Hamdok, threatened to derail the progress made in the transition and to plunge the country back into a cycle of violence. Indeed, political turmoil and violence has since been a major feature of the situation in Sudan as the military seeks to impose its will on Sudanese despite widespread massive protests that ordinary Sudanese continue to mobilize against the coup.

The PSC followed the text of the AU law and its dominant practice in expressing its strong condemnation of the coup in accordance with Article 4 (p) of the AU Constitutive Act. It also decided, as the key outcome of the session, to immediately suspend Sudan from all AU activities until the restoration of the civilian-led Transitional Authority. It also asserted the validity of the all the provisions of the Constitutional Declaration of August 2019 and the Juba

Peace Agreement of October 2020, as well as to respect the timelines stipulated therein.

Although the military, under pressure from the Sudanese public who continue to stage massive protests against the military and the various international measures, made a deal with Prime Minister Hamdok that led to the latter's reinstatement, it has not succeeded to win the support of the Sudanese public. Indeed, the Forces of Freedom and Change (FFC), a civilian coalition which has been part of the power sharing agreement with the military has rejected the political deal.

Anti-military protests continue to insist that those who collaborated and took part in orchestrating the coup should face justice. It was rightly pointed out that contrary to the August 2019 Constitutional Declaration, the political deal signed between the Prime Minister and the military grants the Sovereign Council which is headed by General al-Burhan, the authority of approving the appointment of ministers, thereby eroding the autonomy of the civilian-led transitional government. The situation continues to deteriorate as excessive use of force by security forces against peaceful protesters leading to death and mayhem continues to fuel anger.

The PSC communiqué also contained two key elements that await agreement on the part of the de facto authorities of Sudan for their implementation. The first of this was the decision for the PSC to undertake a mission to Sudan, which was included following the precedent set in Chad, although the PSC made a correction to the precedent by proposing the mission after adopting a decision suspending Sudan, which is in line with applicable AU norms and PSC's own best practice with respect to unconstitutional changes of government. The second was PSC's request for the AU Commission to send his emissary to engage the Sudanese stakeholders on necessary steps needed to expedite the restoration of constitutional order in Sudan.

<sup>3</sup> An Action Plan for prevention and combating terrorism was first adopted in 2002, which had the central aim of concretising the obligations under the 1999 Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism. The new action plan will hence be vital to capture and elaborate ways for responding to contemporary terrorist threats, including violent extremism.



## UPDATES ON THE SITUATION IN SOMALIA

One of the sessions Council convened during the month of October which did not fall within its original programme of work was an update on the situation in Somalia and the status of consultations regarding the AU-IA report on post-2021 AMISOM engagement in Somalia. The session was convened on 28 October and formed Council's 1042<sup>nd</sup> meeting. The outcome of the session was adopted as a [Communiqué](#).

This session was the 7<sup>th</sup> one convened on Somalia and AMISOM within the year, and the second one within the month of October.

In the communiqué, the PSC reiterated its endorsement of option 1 of the four options presented in the AU Independent Assessment Team Report. Unlike the communiqué of its 1037<sup>th</sup> session, this time the PSC explained why it upheld its earlier decision on this option stating that that this option 'would ensure strategic, predictable and sustainable multi-year financing for the future mission, through UN assessed contributions and provides an enhanced level of effectiveness based on updated and objective risk assessment and including through elevated logistical and enablers support and improved command and control.'

At the same time, there is no indication that the position of the FGS changed. Of course, the Council did request the AU Commission to resume consultations with FGS and relevant international partners to reach "mutually acceptable and workable agreement" on the nature and mandates of post-2021 AMISOM and to establish the benchmarks for handing responsibility over to SSF. However, this discussion is envisaged to be undertaken based on the option of establishing "AU-UN Multidimensional Stabilization Mission in Somalia".

A major development since the convening of this 1042<sup>nd</sup> session was the field mission that the PSC undertook to Somalia. On 9 November, a delegation of the AUPSC travelled to Mogadishu for a three days field mission where it met with senior officials of FGS as well as representatives of AMISOM and other relevant stakeholders. According to AU's press release on the field mission, the conclusions

of the visit will inform PSC's next steps in its support to Somalia. The main point emphasised from the side of FGS during the three days meeting with the AUPSC was that the option endorsed by the PSC for AMISOM's post-2021 engagement entails the addition of more troops which goes against the STP. As stressed by Somalia's Foreign Affairs Minister, Mohamed Abdulrazack, the FGS would like to see the reduction of troops from the country. The PSC field mission underscored that agreement on the form that the mission that follows AMISOM takes would be achieved only when the views of the FGS are taken on board and international bodies notably the UN and the EU provide assurance on the provision of the required financial and logistical support for the mission into which AMISOM would transition.

## ADDRESSING DISASTER MANAGEMENT ISSUES IN AFRICA: CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES FOR HUMAN SECURITY

The last PSC session, convened on 29 October, was a thematic session focusing on management of disasters in Africa. The session took place, at the level of Heads of State and Government. The outcome of the session was adopted as a [Communiqué](#).

The session was mainly initiated in the interest of addressing disasters manifesting in the continent mainly in connection with climate change and the covid-19 pandemic. In light of the subject matter addressed, presentation was made by the AU Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment.

Council drew attention to the inherent link between conflicts and disasters induced by natural factors such as draught, flooding, and population growth. Accordingly, one of the session's focus was promoting the adoption of preventive measures which are aimed at detecting, averting and/or reducing disaster risks. As indicated by

Council, this includes the development of early warning and action systems as well as development policies which integrate disaster risk mitigation.

It is known that the AU has already developed several mechanisms to manage and respond to disasters. The Africa Risk Capacity (ARC), the Africa Centre for Disease Control (Africa CDC), and the AU Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) Centre are among those that Council recalled at its session to underscore the importance of collaboration and coordination among such mechanisms for effective result in controlling the impacts of disasters on the continent.

A key decision adopted by Council was its endorsement of proposal of Algeria's Minister of Foreign Affairs and the National Community Abroad, Mr. Ramtane Lamamra, for the creation of a "Continental Civilian Capacity for Disasters Preparedness and Response" and its request for the AU Commission to prepare modalities for the establishment of the proposed continental capacity.

As indicated in the Communiqué, the continental capacity is mainly aimed at providing timely assistance to member States affected by disasters, through resources that are to be drawn from individual national capacities. The formation of such mechanism necessitates that how this capacity builds on and reinforces other relevant existing AU mechanisms including those noted in the communiqué.

In terms of tasks, the AU Commission was assigned by Council to develop "an overarching and comprehensive COVID-19 Recovery Framework" that incorporates previous disasters. Council also reiterated its call to expedite the operationalisation of the AU Humanitarian Agency (AUHA). It is to be recalled that at its 1025<sup>th</sup> session Council pointed out the main pending tasks for the operationalisation of the AUHA. One of these tasks is the finalisation of the Statute of the AUHA – a draft of which was developed by the AU Commission in 2020 and is to be validated by the Special Technical Committee (STC) on Migration, Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) (MR&IDPS-STC) at its 4<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session scheduled for 12 November. Another crucial requirement for the operationalisation of the AUHA is ensuring sufficient financing through member States'

contribution in line with Assembly/AU/Dec.604 (XXVI), which aims to fund the AUHA through African resources, as to ensure African ownership of the agency.

## OTHER PSC ACTIVITIES DURING THE MONTH

In addition to its substantive sessions, Council also had multiple preparatory meetings at the Committee of Experts (CoE) as well as Ambassadorial levels. These included the preparatory meetings convened at CoE level for the 5<sup>th</sup> Joint Retreat and 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Joint Consultative Meeting of the PSC and the European Union (EU) Political and Security Commission (EUPSC);<sup>4</sup> the 6<sup>th</sup> Joint Seminar and 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Joint Consultative Meeting with the United Nations (UN) Security Council (UNSC);<sup>5</sup> the 8<sup>th</sup> High Level Seminar;<sup>6</sup> and the PSC Heads of State and Government level meeting.

At Ambassadorial level, members of the Council also convened preparatory meetings for the Joint Consultative Meetings between the PSC and EUPSC as well as that between the PSC and the UNSC. The PSC CoE also convened during the month to consider the activity report of the PSC which is to be submitted to the AU Assembly at the upcoming Summit in January/February 2022.

<sup>4</sup> Due to time related restrictions, this year's consultative meeting between the AUPSC and UPSC could not take place.

<sup>5</sup> The AUPSC and UNSC convened their annual informal joint seminar and annual joint consultative meeting on 16 and 17 December respectively. The informal joint seminar addressed key areas of partnership between the two Councils with a focus on two areas: predictable and sustainable financing for AU-led Peace Support Operations (PSOs) and enhancing cooperation between the AUPSC and the UNSC, with a focus on working methods of the two Councils. The joint consultative meeting focused on four agenda items: the situation in Somalia; situation in the Sahel region; support to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Mission to Mozambique (SAMIM) and combating terrorism and violent extremism in Africa.

<sup>6</sup> The central purpose of the annual High-Level Seminar of the PSC is to strengthen coordination and collaboration between the PSC and the African members of the UNSC (A3 States) regarding African peace and security concerns. It is to be recalled that the previous (7<sup>th</sup>) High-Level Seminar was convened in January 2020, in Libreville, Gabon. This year's High-Level Seminar was convened in Oran, Algeria in December.





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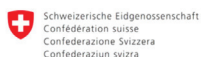
### ABOUT AMANI AFRICA

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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