

# MONTHLY DIGEST ON THE AUPSC

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**AMANI AFRICA**

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## MONTHLY DIGEST ON THE AUPSC – FEBRUARY 2022

### THE MONTH AT A GLANCE

In February, Kenya chaired the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC). From the six sessions initially inscribed in the program of work, three were removed.<sup>1</sup> Following the addition of a session not initially envisaged, the PSC held four sessions during the month.<sup>2</sup>

The type of sessions convened during the month included one thematic session held at the Ministerial level and three country/region specific sessions held at ambassadorial level.

While the outcomes of two of the four sessions were adopted as communiqués, the other two sessions didn't have publicly available outcome documents. The release of those publicly available outcome documents took about 7 days on average.

### THE PSC CALLS FOR ELEVATING URBAN PLANNING TO A NATIONAL SECURITY ISSUE

The first session of the month held at ministerial level took place on 8<sup>th</sup> of February 2022. This 1063<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Council was the first session dedicated to the theme of the nexus between Urbanization, Women, Peace and Security.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The initial programme of work for the month included ambassadorial sessions dedicated to the situation in Sudan and the situation in South Sudan as well as a Summit level session to consider two agenda items: the situation in Western Sahara and a follow-up on the implementation of the Nairobi deliberations on terrorism and violent extremism. These sessions were postponed following the revision of the programme of work.

<sup>2</sup> On the request of the High-Representative of the Chairperson of the AU Commission for the Horn of Africa, the PSC included a session on the Horn of Africa not initially part of the program of work.

<sup>3</sup> The briefers of the session outside of the AU were Ms Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Executive Director of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and Mr. Mabingue Ngom, Senior Advisor to the Executive Director and Director of the UNFPA Representation Office to AU and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa.



#### Background to the session

Mismatch between the supply of services and pace of urbanization, aggravating conditions of insecurity for vulnerable groups, particularly women and girls.

Women living in cities and urban areas, particularly women with lower living standards are disproportionately affected by urban insecurity varying from crimes and violence, to forced evictions resulting from discriminatory development and global economic policies as well as laws that don't provide secure protection to women's land and property rights.

In the [Communique](#) it adopted after the session, the Council called for the elevation of urban planning to a national security issue.

The council also highlighted the following issues:

- The need for redoubling efforts by member states to address inequalities and underdevelopment, notably those affecting women and girls on account of social stereotypes;
- The urgency to enhance safety and security in urban areas, and for sustained efforts, towards safeguarding women and children and protecting their liberties;
- The need to empower women to meaningfully participate in decision making and policy formulation relating to urban planning and development; and
- A gender-based approach in city policies and planning, and reinforcing the gender dimension into the national technical committees dealing with public services, local governments, housing and urban development, property rights, and secure land tenure.

### Key actionable decisions requiring follow up

Emphasizing the need for the Continental Comprehensive Roadmap on Urbanization to be Gender-sensitive and to fully encompass women's rights and security and liberty, **the Council requested** the AU Commission, through the Office of the AU

Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security and other relevant departments, in collaboration with Member States and RECs/RMs, **to develop a Continental Comprehensive Roadmap on Urbanization** that is both security and gender-sensitive and submit to the PSC for consideration.

## Relevant UN discussion

- Relatedly, the UNSC at its high-level open debate under the theme 'Wars in cities: protection of civilians in urban settings' held on 25th January 2022, discussed the gendered impact of war in cities. Member states alluded that women and girls are at higher risk of being exposed to sexual and gender based violence in urban conflict notably when on the move due to displacement. UNSC since its adoption of [Resolution 1265\(1999\)](#), recognized conflicts in urban areas proliferate taking a devastating toll on civilians, with a disproportionate impact on women and children.

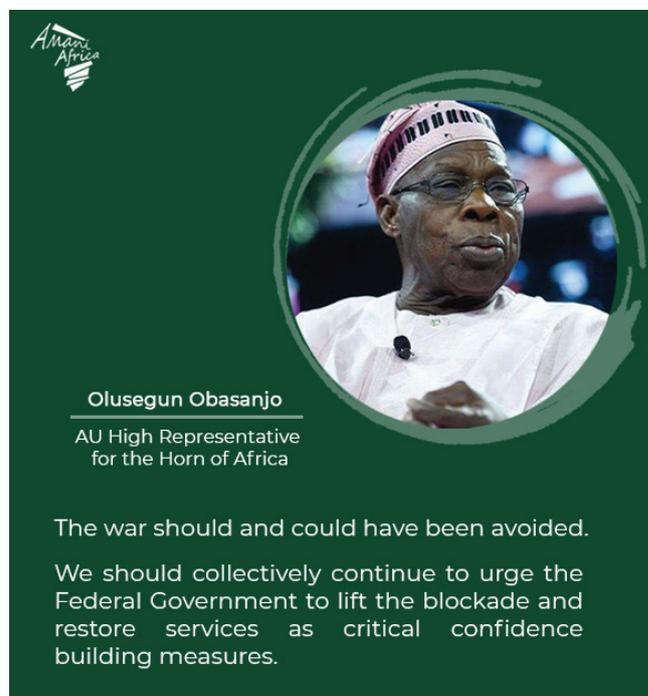
- In addition, on 16<sup>th</sup> of February 2022 the UN-Habitat launched key message highlighting techniques to increase the recognition and protection of women's housing, land and property rights in fragile and conflict-affected contexts and the different ways to empower and increase women's participation in processes related to land management and housing, land and property rights and deliberated the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.

## HIGH REPRESENTATIVE OF AUC CHAIR FOR THE HORN OF AFRICA CALLS FOR RESTORATION OF SERVICES IN TIGRAY & FULL WITHDRAWAL OF ALL PARTIES FROM OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

The second session of the month, added on the request of the High Representative to the program of work of the PSC after the adoption of the program, was a briefing by the AU High Representative for the Horn of Africa. Former President of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo, the High Representative of the AU Commission Chairperson for the Horn of Africa, provided an update briefing to the PSC on the

situation in Ethiopia.

While the PSC did not have the opportunity to interact with the High Representative on his briefing, his briefing provided an overview of the peace and security developments in the conflict situation in northern Ethiopia and the state of his diplomatic engagements since his last briefing to the PSC in November 2021. While underscoring his belief that 'the war should and could have been avoided' and 'the death toll in this conflict stands in the thousands, with untold numbers of incidents of gender-based violence including rape, millions displaced internally and beyond Ethiopia's borders', he highlighted as positive developments the establishment of the National Dialogue Commission, overall reduction of hostilities and release of some prisoners. Regarding 'the dire humanitarian situation in Tigray' and the impact of 'the continued limitations in access to essential services' on the humanitarian situation, High Representative Obasanjo stated that 'We should collectively continue to urge the Federal Government to lift the blockade and restore services as critical confidence building measures.' He also called for 'the granting of unhindered humanitarian access to the Tigray region and other affected areas' and full withdrawal of all parties from occupied territories and 'return to their original positions.'



This is the third time the High Representative to the Horn of Africa briefed the PSC since his appointment in August 2021. The briefing session had no formal outcome.

## Previous briefings of the High Representative to the Horn of Africa to PSC

- 28 October 2021: at PSC's 1042<sup>nd</sup> session, AU High Representative for the Horn of Africa, former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, briefed the Council broadly on his mandate, strategy and roadmap for its implementation as well as priority issues in the Horn.
- 08 November 2021: Council received the first substantive briefing by the High Representative for the Horn of Africa at its 1045<sup>th</sup> session. Amani Africa's [Monthly Digest for November 2021](#) has more details on this briefing.

UNSC has been more active on its engagement on this situation. So far, it has dedicated a number of meetings on the situation, mostly under AoB, the first one having taken place on 24 November 2020.

### UNSC meetings on the situation:

- 24 November 2020: this was the first UNSC meeting on the situation in Tigray region of Ethiopia, addressed under AoB.
- 13 December 2020: the second UNSC meeting on the humanitarian situation in Tigray region of Ethiopia, also addressed as an AoB.
- 02 February 2021: the humanitarian situation in Tigray region of Ethiopia, addressed as AoB.
- 03 March 2021: UNSC discussed the humanitarian situation in Tigray region of Ethiopia under AoB.
- 14 April 2021: the humanitarian situation in Tigray region of Ethiopia was addressed under AoB. Few days later, on 22 April 2021, the UNSC issued a Press Statement expressing concern over the humanitarian situation in Tigray ([SC/14501](#)).
- 14 June 2021: UNSC held an "informal interactive dialogue" on the humanitarian situation in Tigray.
- 02 July 2021: open briefing on the situation in Ethiopia, under the agenda of Peace and security in Africa ([S/PV.8812](#)).

- 26 August 2021: briefing on the situation in Tigray region of Ethiopia, under the agenda of Peace and security in Africa ([S/PV.8843](#)).
- 01 October 2021: the situation in Ethiopia was discussed as AoB.
- 06 October 2021: briefing on the situation in Ethiopia, under the agenda of Peace and security in Africa ([S/PV.8875](#)).
- 08 November 2021: meeting on Ethiopia under the agenda item Peace and Security in Africa ([S/PV.8899](#)). Prior to the meeting – on 05 November 2021 – Council members also issued a Press Statement expressing concern over the expansion and intensification of the conflict ([SC/14691](#)).
- 20 December 2021: the situation in Ethiopia was discussed as AoB.
- 27 January 2022: the situation in Ethiopia was discussed as AoB.
- 14 April 2022: the situation in Ethiopia was discussed as AoB.

## COUNCIL ABANDONS FIXED TIMELINE FOR TRANSITION AND ENDORSES ECOWAS'S DECISION TO UPHOLD SANCTIONS AGAINST GUINEA

In the [Communiqué](#) of its 1064<sup>th</sup> session convened on 10 February, Council endorsed the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)'s decision to uphold the sanction imposed against Guinea.

### ECOWAS decision:

- Extraordinary Summit of ECOWAS Heads of State and Government of 3 February 2022: decision upholding the suspension of Guinea and requesting Guinean authorities to provide an acceptable timeline for the restoration of constitutional order.

## Abandoning the setting of fixed timeline for transition after coup

On the major sticking point of the timeline for the transitional period, the PSC opted for urging the *de facto* authorities of Guinea 'to expedite the establishment of a clear, practical and time-bound calendar on the implementation of the Transition Charter, in particular, the holding of national elections, to facilitate the prompt return to constitutional order.'

PSC's decision follows the change in the approach of ECOWAS to the timeline for transition. While in its earlier decision ECOWAS called for a six-month transitional period, the extraordinary summit of ECOWAS held on 3 February abandoned the six-month requirement in favor of 'an acceptable timetable for restoring constitutional order'. This manifests ECOWAS's recognition that its approach of setting a specific timeline was a failure.

In following the approach of ECOWAS, the PSC left the timeline for the transition open for negotiation. Unlike ECOWAS, the PSC did not simply leave the preparation of the timeline for the *de facto* authorities. Instead, it tasked the AU Commission, working in collaboration with ECOWAS, 'to provide the needed technical support to Guinea in order to ensure that the Transition Authority develop a reasonable and acceptable timeline for the transition to constitutional order.'

This embraces the kind of shift we advocated in our analyses from a focus on a set timeline to facilitating a reform plan that strikes the right balance between two imperatives. These imperatives entail the need for the return of the army to the barracks in the shortest time possible to prevent the entrenchment of the influence of the army in politics and the need for initiating, developing and implementing the minimum reform measures that address the factors that created the conditions for the coup as measures for preventing recurrence.

## Key actionable decisions requiring follow up

The PSC outlined a number of actionable decisions in the communiqué of its 1064<sup>th</sup> session. Echoing our 9 February 2022 edition of [Insights on the PSC](#), the

PSC called on 'the AU Commission working together with ECOWAS and the UN, to undertake a needs assessment mission to Guinea with a view of engaging Guinean authorities and other stakeholders on the adoption of transitional plan that is in accordance with AU and ECOWAS norms.'

Indicating the necessity of implementing relevant reforms necessary for preventing recurrence of coup, it also requested the AU Commission, 'through the established Joint Monitoring Mechanism, to ensure the provision of requisite technical support to the National Transition Council, especially in areas regarding elections support, social cohesion and constitutionalism, which are critical for the establishment of *a sustainable post-transition order*,' while also 'reiterating the need for addressing the root causes, including those relating to governance and democratic deficits.'

The PSC in its communiqué also tasked the Chairperson of the AU Commission to provide quarterly briefings to the PSC.

## Relevant previous PSC decisions:

- 06 September 2021: an emergency session on the situation in Guinea convened a day after the coup of 05 September. The session formed Council's 1028<sup>th</sup> meeting and the PSC withheld the adoption of an outcome.
- 10 September 2021: at its 1030<sup>th</sup> session convened on 10 September, Council suspended Guinea from all AU activities.
- 05 October 2021: this was the 1036<sup>th</sup> meeting of the PSC where it endorsed the Communiqué of ECOWAS's Extraordinary Summit of 16 September 2021, with a specific reference to paragraph 9 wherein the regional bloc decided for presidential and legislative elections to be conducted within six months.



### Other relevant ECOWAS decisions:

- Extraordinary Session of ECOWAS Heads of State and Government of 8 September 2021: Guinea suspended from all of ECOWAS's governing bodies; and
- Extraordinary Summit of ECOWAS Heads of State and Government of 16 September 2021: ECOWAS stipulated a six months period for Guinea to conduct elections.

## PSC EMPHASISED THE NEED TO CONSIDER THE VIEWS OF AMISOM T/PCCS SERIOUSLY IN PLANNING TRANSITION

The other session of the PSC was held on 15 February focusing on updates on the status of consultations on transition of AMISOM. The session came against the background of series of meetings held in Addis Ababa, Mogadishu and virtually involving the Federal Government of Somalia, the AU and the UN and the EU as well.

The PSC received updates on the consultations on the draft Concept of Operations (CONOPS), the joint proposal and the logistics support concept for AMISOM's successor mission the AU Transition Mission in Somalia. The 14 February 2022 edition of [Insights on the PSC](#) pointed out as weakest link in the consultation process the fact that 'there was no indication that AMISOM TCCs have been consulted and their views taken on board in the new joint AU-Somalia proposal.'

While there is no formal outcome document for the session, during the deliberation on the state of consultations members of the PSC emphasized the importance of considering the views of AMISOM troops and police contributing countries (T/PCCs) seriously in the planning process of the transition including the development of the CONOPS for ATMIS.

### Relevant previous PSC decisions:

- 30 July 2021: at its 1015<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 30 July, the PSC considered the report of the AU Independent Assessment Team on the AU's engagement in and with Somalia post-2021.
- 31 August 2021: the PSC received briefing on the meeting between the AU Commission and the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS), which took place from 18 to 19 August.
- 07 October 2021: the PSC received briefing on the status of consultations on the Independent Assessment Report on AMISOM Post-2021, at its 1037<sup>th</sup> session.
- 28 October 2021: at its 1042<sup>nd</sup> meeting, PSC convened a follow-on session the status of the consultations on the Independent Assessment Report on AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) Post-2021.
- 07 December 2021: the last PSC session in 2021 convened to follow up on the status of the consultations on the Independent Assessment Report on AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) Post-2021 (1053<sup>rd</sup> meeting).

## Relevant previous UNSC decisions:

- 12 March 2021: the UNSC adopted Resolution 2568 (2021), which reauthorized AMISOM until December 2021. At that meeting, the Council noted the recommendations of the UN independent assessment on the security situation in Somalia post 2021 and recognized the need for a reconfigured AMISOM.
- 21 December 2021: UNSC adopted Resolution 2614 (2021) which authorized AMISOM's mandate roll-over until 31 March 2022.

Sudan to receive the delegation.

## OTHER PSC ACTIVITIES DURING THE MONTH

As part of its program of work for the month, Council undertook a field visit to South Sudan on 22-25 February. This is the sixth visit Council has conducted to the country since the outbreak of the civil war in 2013. The visit mainly served for Council to gather first-hand information regarding the political, economic and humanitarian situation on the ground. The delegation visited among others, Bor, Jonglei State and Pibor. In addition to a courtesy call with President Salva Kiir and consultations with First Vice President Riek Machar, Council members were able to engage with important stakeholders including the National Transitional Committee (NTC) and cabinet ministers, Deputy Governor and community leaders of Jonglei State, Chief Administrator and community leaders of the Greater Pibor Administrative Area, the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), the Troika (United States, United Kingdom, and Norway) and other international partners and representatives of civil society organisations (CSOs).

It is worth noting that the transition in South Sudan is at a critical and delicate period. While much of the transitional processes remain unfinished, the end of the transition and the timeline for holding of national elections in early 2023 is fast approaching. This necessitates sustained engagement of the AU.

Although there was a plan to consider the report of the field mission during March 2022, Council is yet to convene a session in that regard.

The PSC was scheduled to undertake a visit to Sudan but was unable to do so due to lack of readiness of



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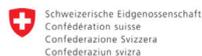
### ABOUT AMANI AFRICA

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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