

MONTHLY DIGEST ON THE AUPSC

AMANI AFRICA

Media and Research Services

M A R C H
2 0 2 2



MONTHLY DIGEST ON THE AUPSC – MARCH 2022

THE MONTH AT A GLANCE

In March, Lesotho chaired the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC). The Council convened six sessions during the month. Two sessions that formed part of the initial program of work were dropped during the course of the month.¹

During March, the PSC had only one session on country specific situation. Four of the sessions addressed thematic agenda items and the remaining one session considered the Conclusions of the Inaugural Joint Retreat of the PSC and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM).

Five of the sessions held during the month had publicly available outcome documents.² On average, it took about two weeks for the release of these publicly available outcome documents. All sessions of the PSC for March were held at the level of Ambassadors.

COUNCIL REQUESTS THE AU COMMISSION TO ENGAGE THE PRESIDENCY OF THE COP27 (EGYPT) ON YOUTH PARTICIPATION

The first session of the month, which took place on 3rd March, constituted the fourth session of the PSC on 'Youth, Peace and Security' since the Council's decision to 'institutionalize and regularize an annual open session dedicated to the theme of Youth, Peace and Security in Africa' at its 807th session held in November 2018.³

¹ These two sessions were on the Horn of Africa and a consultative meeting with Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC) and Civil Society Organizations to actualise Article 20 of the PSC Protocol.

² On 10 March, Council convened a session to receive updates on the operationalisation of the African Standby Force (ASF). The session was regarded as an internal briefing and for that reason, its outcome was not adopted in a publicly available format.

³ The briefers and speakers that introduced the agenda included AU Commissioner for PAPS, Bankole Adeoye; Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the AU and head of UNDAU, Ms Hanna Tetteh; Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the AUC on Youth, Chido Cleo Mpemba; Kadiddatou Sako Traoré and Joseph Akilimali.

The session among others aimed to interact with the new Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the AU Commission on Youth, Chido Cleo Mpemba and some of the second cohort of the five regional African Youth Ambassadors for Peace (AYAP) and discuss developments relating to the Continental Framework on Youth Peace and Security (CFYPS) and its 10-Year Implementation Plan as well as UN Security Council Resolutions 2250 (2015), 2419 (2018) and 2535 (2020).

In the [Communique](#) it adopted, the PSC outlined specific elements that it deemed critical for advancing the youth, peace and security agenda. These included:

- The imperative for creating enabling environment necessary political framework for meaningful youth participation in all levers of decision making and promote the political participation of young people, including within civil society organizations and political parties, in order to prepare the new generations to assume their responsibilities and fully exercise their rights and duties as citizens.
- Collaboration between the AU Commission and RECs/RMs on the implementation of the Continental Framework on Youth Peace and Security, and AU Commission support to Member States to develop NAPs.
- Efforts by the youth to continue utilizing relevant national, regional, continental, and global instruments to further enhance their impact on life transformation and the need to mobilize the youth in the diaspora.
- Consistent dialogue between policymakers and young peacemakers to inform interventions in situations of conflict, transition or post-conflict and reconstruction.
- Include the AYAPs in the AU Elections Observer Mission and all efforts relating to elections on the Continent.

In terms of development of a National Action Plan (NAP) based on the 10-year implementation plan, the PSC commended the Federal Government of Nigeria for being the first country in Africa to develop its NAP on YPS. The NAP on YPS was developed by the Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution under the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Centre for Sustainable

Development and Education in Africa (CSDEA). In this respect, the PSC encouraged other member States to do the same and requested the AU Commission to assist member States in developing NAPs.

Key actionable decisions requiring follow up

In line with the implementation of the AU Continental framework and its 10-year implementation plan, the Council made the following requests:

- Council requested the AU Commission to submit the draft Guidelines for the Development and Implementation of National Action Plans for the AU Continental Framework on Youth, Peace and Security and the PSC Committee of Experts to review the draft ahead of consideration by the PSC
- PSC reiterated its request to the AU Commission to regularly brief the Council on the status of progress in the implementation of the 10-Year Implementation Plan of the Continental Framework on Youth, Peace and Security and challenges faced, including **through periodic reports and annual briefings**.

On some of the peace and security issues of concern for African youth including violent extremism and migration and peace and security, the PSC took two decisions requiring follow up by the AUC:

- It requested the African Centre for Studies and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT) in Algiers to conduct **a study on youth indoctrination** in Africa and on the prevention of the risks of radicalization and violent extremism among young people; and
- It also requested the AU Commission to conduct **an empirical study** on youth, migration, peace and security, including the situation of young African refugees, to propose actionable policies to safeguard youth from the adverse impacts of illegal immigration and its underlying factors.

COUNCIL AUTHORIZES ATMIS TO REPLACE AMISOM, WITH ATMIS ENVISAGED TO BE LIQUIDATED BY 31 DECEMBER 2024

On 8 March 2022, Council, at its second session of the month constituting its 1068th meeting, considered the transition of AMISOM into an AU transition mission. While international partners such as the UN and EU delivered statements, one of the major stakeholders of the deployment of the mission – troop and police contributing countries (T/PCCs) - did not take part in this session.

The PSC decided to 'authorize' the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) to replace the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). In terms of what this entails, the [Communiqué](#) adopted after the session stated that 'ATMIS shall entail a reconfiguration of AMISOM', guided by the Somali Transition Plan (STP), which outlines the security transition priorities, key objectives, and the process towards the gradual handover of security responsibilities to the Somali Security Forces by end of ATMIS's mandate set for 31 December 2024.

Somalia Transitional Plan (STP)

The first STP was developed by the FGS in 2018 to guide the security transition for the SSF to take full security responsibilities by 2021. But that failed and the FGS accordingly introduced a revised STP in February 2021. Currently, the process of updating the revised version of the STP is underway to reflect the outcomes of the technical consultations between AU and FGS. The latest version is expected to be submitted to the PSC as well as the UN Security Council sometime time in the future.

Mandate of ATMIS: combating Shabaab, stabilization and peacebuilding

It is worth noting that the role of ATMIS is not confined to fighting Al Shabaab, although this role remains central to the mandate of ATMIS as it was to AMISOM. ATMIS is mandated to 'degrade Al Shabaab and other terrorist groups'; 'provide security to population centres and open the main supply routes'; 'develop the

capacity of the Somali Security Forces to enable them to take over security responsibilities by the end of the transition period’.

Recognizing that building strong and resilient national state institutions is key to achieving sustainable peace, security and stability and highlighting the critical role of peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction and development program, ATMIS is also tasked to implement peacebuilding initiatives. These include ‘support peace and reconciliation efforts of the FGS’ and ‘help develop the capacity of the security, justice and local authority institutions’ of the FGS and Federal Member States (FGM). Accordingly, while the reconfiguration plan envisages drawdown of ATMIS troops by 2000 troops at the end of phase I of ATMIS’s mandate by 31 December 2022, it envisages that the size of the police component of ATMIS will maintain its current strength of 1040 until the liquidation of the mission by 31 December 2024 and that of the civilian component will increase by 15 from the current size of 70 personnel at the start of phase II of ATMIS’s mandate in January 2023.

A more agile ATMIS with stronger command and control

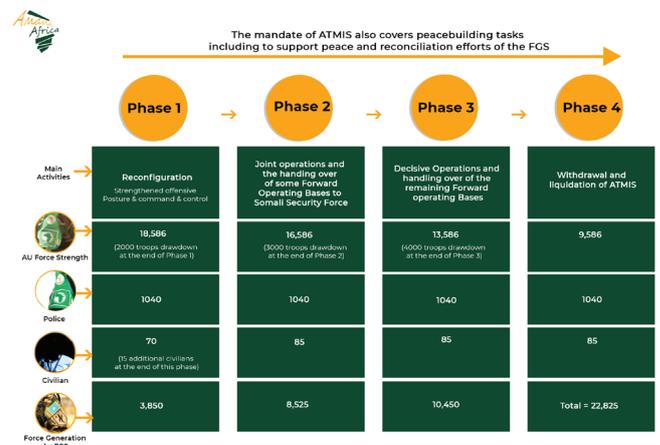
PSC envisaged that ATMIS is to be re-organized to become ‘more agile, more mobile, more flexible, and better able to respond to the emerging threats by enhancing its force protection and posture as well as by creating mobile and quick reaction forces.’ It accordingly underscored, among others, **the critical importance** of additional force multipliers and force enablers for the reconfiguration and transfer of security responsibilities to the SSF.

As part of the force reconfiguration, the PSC decision also sought to strengthen the command-and-control structure of the mission, a measure meant to rectify the lack of effective control of the force commander of AMISOM over national contingents who acted on the basis of authorization from their respective capitals. To that end, the PSC decided that the force commander shall come from the largest TCC and be empowered with clear command and control competencies over all the forces of the mission, and, in this regard, **stresses** the importance that all troops strictly adhere to the command-and-control structure of ATMIS. How far the TCCs will be willing to relinquish

the command and control of their troops however remains to be seen.

Four phases in the implementation of ATMIS mandate

The new ATMIS Concept of Operations (CONOPs) – an outcome of a technical consultations between AU and FGS in January and February of this year, which both Councils endorsed – laid out a four-phased approach to the gradual transfer of security responsibilities to the SSF (see the table below). The composition and the specific objectives and tasks of the mission will accordingly evolve across the different phases of the transition. FGS also set targets for the generation of force in each phase.



The four phases of ATMIS mandate

As further elaborated in the ATMIS CONOPs, some of the specific tasks in the reconfiguration phase (Phase I) include finalizing the joint ATMIS and SSF reconfiguration plan, conducting equipment reviews, undertaking a joint security assessment to guide planning, the generation and mobilization of SSF, the enhancement of operational capacities and capabilities, the consolidation and combat mentoring of the SSF, and conducting limited but jointly planned and targeted priority operations.

In phase II, the main task will be to undertake joint shaping and clearance operations across all sectors to prepare the ground for decisive operations in Phase III. It is also in this phase that some of the identified forward operating bases would be handed over to the SSF. Although Communiqué 1068 does not outline the subsequent drawdowns that are expected to take place, in line with the CONOPs, resolution 2628 envisages further reduction of 3000 troops at the end of the second phase towards the end of 2023.

The third phase of the transition is for the reconfigured mission with strength of 13,586 troops to take decisive operations in all sectors against Al Shabaab and further handover of additional forward operating bases. This would clear the ground for the withdrawal of ATMIS and the SSF to take full charge of the security responsibilities. At the end of this phase (June 2024), 4000 more troops would be reduced.

In the last phase, ATMIS would witness its withdrawal of the remaining military troops (9586), police (1040) and civilians (85), and its eventual liquidation at the end of December 2024 with transfer of full responsibilities to SSF.

No guarantee of linear progression for ATMIS

But as the experience of AMISOM illustrates, linear progression of the kind envisaged in the phased approach to the mandate of ATMIS is far from guaranteed. The very success of ATMIS and whether the above exit strategy would be carried out in accordance with provided timeframes largely depend on two main factors, and indeed depending on improvements of the security situation on the ground.

First, as pointed out in the communiqué of the 1068th session, the force generation by the SSF will be 'key to the success of the mandate of ATMIS', further urging the FGS to commit itself towards achieving the benchmarks and timelines as indicated in the CONOPs to ensure that it is able to takeover security responsibilities from ATMIS. As outlined in the CONOPs, the FGS is expected to generate forces in each phase of the mission along with the phased drawdown of ATMIS. Accordingly, the FGS would generate 3,850 security forces at the end of the first phase, whereas 8,525 forces would be generated in the second phase. The third phase would see the generation of additional 10,450 forces, which would bring the total number of forces generated during the four phases of ATMIS to 22,825. The envisioned withdrawal of the mission at the end of December 2024 is therefore predicated on the capacity of the FGS in generating the security forces with the required number and standard, failing which ATMIS would risk the fate of its predecessor – prolonged stay in Somalia or departing a Somalia vulnerable to experience reversals.

The other factor that determines the success of ATMIS

is the extent in which the new mission is able to secure sustainable and predictable funding and the requisite logistic supports. The PSC in its communiqué underscored the need for a 'reconfiguration of UNSOS' that ensures a speedy response to the logistical requirements for 'high-tempo offensive operations'.



As UNSOS is resourced through voluntary contributions to a dedicated United Nations Trust Fund, finding predictable and sufficient funding to this arrangement remains a big challenge. In his assessment of the implications of a reconfigured AU mission for UN logistical support in Somalia, UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, flagged up the reduction of contributions to the Trust Fund and its impact over UNSOS's ability to sustain both the scope of its support and the number of supported personnel.

In its communiqué that mandated ATMIS, Council for instance reiterated the 'critical importance of sustainable and predictable financing, at adequate levels and for the full duration of the mission from 1 April, 2022 up to 31 December, 2024, to the overall success of ATMIS in attaining its strategic objectives...' UN Security Council in its presidential statement (S/PRST/2021/21) dated 28 October 2021 also recognized the potential impact of 'ad hoc and unpredictable financing arrangements' on the effectiveness of AU-led PSOs, which further encouraged dialogue on options for addressing this outstanding issue. After many years of engagement however, the discussion on accessing the UN assessed contribution for AU PSOs has not moved anywhere. Furthermore, while the Council in its 1068th session made clear its demand for the use of UN assessed contributions to finance

ATMIS, some permanent members of the UN Security Council are still averse to discussing the financing issue in a mission-specific context like ATMIS.

Key actionable decisions requiring follow up

The PSC

- Urged the FGS to meet its commitments towards achieving the benchmarks and timelines as indicated in the CONOPs, and to ensure that it is able to generate the forces as appropriate for assuming incremental responsibility of security, including, inter alia, the generation of holding forces to take over Forward Operating Bases, alongside offensive forces tasked with clearing operations jointly with ATMIS;
- Called upon the UN to continue providing logistical support to the current authorised 70 civilian personnel up to 31 December 2022 and requests the UN to increase logistics support for an additional 15 civilian personnel at the end of Phase I.

Requested body	Deliverables	Timeline
AUC	Ensure that the full staff complement of ATMIS is completed	31 December 2022
AUC, working closely with AMISOM	Establish an Integrated Task Force, including T/PCCs, to facilitate the reconfiguration of AMISOM into ATMIS	During Phase-I of transition
AUC	Submit reports to Council on the implementation of ATMIS mandate	Every quarter
AUC	Undertake a study on lessons learned on AMISOM and its activities over the past 15 years to identify and document good practices that can be utilized by AU Peace Support Operations	No Timeline
UN, in consultation with AUC and FGS	Realign the UN Logistics Support Plan submitted for the provision of logistical support to ATMIS and SSF fully with the ATMIS CONOPs, as well as reconfiguration of UN Support Office to Somalia (UNSOS)	<i>The nature of the activity suggests that this is done early enough as it is critical to enable execution of tasks in phases I & II</i>
ATMIS and AUC, working in collaboration with FGS & UN	Complete mission equipment review to finalize ATMIS Status of Unit Requirements (SUR) and identify the necessary enablers, multipliers, and needed equipment	As soon as possible

ATMIS, FGS & UNSOS	Put in place a coordination mechanism to assist in expediting mobilization and utilization of the additional forces to be generated as per the SSF force generation plan and targets outlined in the CONOPs	No timeline
--------------------	---	-------------

Summary and timeline of further specific deliverables requested by Council at the 1068th session

FULL OPERATIONALISATION OF THE ASF – IS THE AU GETTING ANY CLOSER TO ACTUALISING ASF’S FULL ACTIVATION?

Updates on the status of operationalisation of the African Standby Force (ASF) formed one of Council's agenda items of the 1069th session, convened on 10 March.⁴

The briefing was essential in providing updates to the Council on the status of seven key aspects of the ASF:

- The first one relates to the **Five-Year Strategic Work Plan on the Operationalisation of the ASF (2016-2020) or the Maputo Work Plan**. The 2016-2020 Maputo Work Plan was developed based on the outcomes of the 2015 Amani Africa II Field Training Exercise and the report of the 2015 Independent Panel of Experts Assessment of the ASF. As the implementation period of the work plan expired in 2020, the AU Commission has been engaged in the process of adopting a successor work plan based on a review of the previous one. At the session, PSC was briefed that the draft successor work plan which includes elements of the ASF Roadmap considered and adopted at PSC's 1007th session, was shared for consideration by the Specialised Technical Committee on Defence, Security and Safety (STCDSS).

⁴ At the session, Council was briefed by the AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS), Bankole Adeoye as well as representatives of some of the Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs). The East African Standby Force (EASF); the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) Multinational Force for Central Africa (FOMAC); North African Regional Capability (NARC) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Standby Force were the RECs/RMs represented at the meeting.

At its 14th Ordinary Session convened on 12 May 2022, the STCDSS considered the draft 2021-2025 strategic work plan for the enhancement of ASF. Based on its review, the STCDSS has requested the AU Commission, working closely with RECs/RMs, to undertake a comprehensive review of the 2016 - 2020 Maputo work plan in order to form the basis for additional inputs to the 2021-2025 work plan. Accordingly, the STCDSS indicated that the draft 2021-2025 work plan should be shared with the RECs/RMs for final inputs and validation by 30 November 2022 for submission to the 15th meeting of the STCDSS.

Relevant previous PSC decision on the five-year work plan:

At the 1007th PSC session of 8 July 2021 ([PSC/PR/COMM.1007\(2021\)](#)), the Council considered the Report of the Chairperson of the AU Commission on the status of the full operationalisation ASF and the continental logistics base (CLB). It was indicated in the Report that efforts were already underway to finalise the successor five-year work plan for 2021 – 2025.

ii) The second aspect of ASF operationalisation Council was updated on was the **status of the MoU between AU and RECs/RMs on the Deployment and Employment of ASF**. In that regard, Council was informed that the MoU has already been finalized, having been cleared by the AU Legal Counsel, and has been tabled for the consideration of the STCDSS's ordinary session.

At its 14th Ordinary Session of 12 May 2022, the STCDSS considered the draft MoU and requested the AU to establish a Working Group that shall include representatives of the AU, RECs/RMs, Member States to undertake further consultations and inputs to the MoU by 1 September 2022 for submission to an Extraordinary meeting of the STCDSS to be conveyed on 1 November 2022.

iii) The third area Council was updated on was the **force/capability generation aspect of the ASF**. Following the request by the AU Commission in July 2021 for RECs/RMs to verify their pledged capabilities and how they may be made readily available, only the EASF has provided a verification report.

Relevant previous PSC decision on ASF force generation:

The status report on full operationalisation of the ASF and CLB considered and adopted by the PSC at its 1007th session, noted as a particular challenge in the area of force/capability generation, the hesitance and reluctance of RECs/RMs to confirm capabilities pledged and how they are to be made readily available. Almost a year on, it is clear that the challenge persists as only EASF has been able to provide a verification report while the other RECs/RMs are yet to do the same.

iv) The **rapid recruitment and deployment process** was the fourth aspect Council was updated on. Accordingly, Council was informed that of the development of components of an integrated African Standby Capacity (ASC) Roster for civilian, military and police pledged capabilities, that would allow facilitation of timely deployment of personnel has been finalised. A persisting challenge highlighted at the briefing was the insufficient utilisation of the roster for the deployment of civilian personnel in current operations, due to absence of regulations that could facilitate such deployment.

Relevant previous PSC decision on ASC:

As highlighted in status report on full operationalisation of the ASF and CLB considered and adopted by the PSC at its 1007th session, the ASC Roster continues to be populated by the AU and RECs/RMs. The report indicated that as of 01 June 2021, the ASC roster for civilian component had a combined total of 504 members, out of which 164 are female and 340 are male. While the updated data on members of the roster was not made available at the latest ASF update, it can be said based on the gender disaggregation of the previous year's report, there is need to encourage further enlisting of women in the ASC.

v) The fifth area of the update provided to Council's 1069th session focused on the aspect of **training exercises**. In addition to highlighting the Commission's engagement with SADC on possible joint exercises, the planning of maritime exercises by the AU Commission was an interesting element of the update provided. Taking note of emerging security challenges within

Africa's maritime domain, particularly the increasing linkage between maritime crimes and terrorism – the former being utilised to finance the later – the attention given to the maritime domain within the framework of ASF will no doubt be of critical importance.

Relevant previous PSC decision on ASF training and Maritime security:

In the context of employing the ASF to address security challenges within Africa's maritime domain, it is important to take note of Council's 1012th session where it stressed the importance of ensuring that the ASF has the required naval capacity for promoting and ensuring the continent's maritime security and safety.

vi) The **status of the CLB and the Regional Logistics Depots (RLD)** formed the other area of update provided to Council. In that regard, Council was informed that further to previous support from the Chinese government, the CLB is expected to receive equipment from China with estimated worth of USD70 Million, during 2022. Some of the challenges that continue to confront the CLB were also highlighted which include recruitment of staff, establishment of necessary facilities including storage and training infrastructure, provision of security for equipment and approval of the organisational structure of the CLB.

vii) The last aspect of ASF operationalisation Council was updated on is the **continental movement coordination centre (CMCC)**. With respect to that, Council heard that as part of efforts to operationalise the CMCC, a virtual meeting was convened in November 2021 to mobilise support for provision of strategic lift assets. Accordingly, six additional member States have confirmed pledges of various strategic lift assets.

Our take: Instead of trying to apply ASF as framed in the ASF concept it is better to focus on using ASF capabilities for AU mandated or authorized missions

In practical terms, much of what is left for the operationalization of the ASF are mostly conceptual, political and legal issues. These have not blocked the use of the capabilities mobilized towards the operationalization of the ASF for deploying AU mandated or authorized peace support operations.

Indeed, the more than a dozen peace support operations run under the AU flag have increasingly benefited from and utilized ASF capabilities. The main missing elements for the operationalization of the ASF as framed in the ASF concept are:

- Mandating of mission using ASF mandating process, timelines and scenarios;
- Constituting such mission from the capabilities pledged by member states and prepared for ASF purposes by RECs/RMs Planning Elements; and
- The conduct of such mission on the basis of AU ASF doctrine.

It is not clear that there is wisdom in insisting that the ASF is operationalized in this particular way as initially conceptualized. Instead, the focus should be on ensuring that AU mandated or authorized peace support operations increasingly and more fully draw on and make use of ASF capabilities and follow to the extent it is practicable ASF frameworks.

PSC INSTITUTIONALISES ITS JOINT RETREAT WITH THE APRM

In addition to the updates on operationalisation of ASF, the other agenda item discussed at Council's 1069th session of 10 March was the consideration and adoption of the Conclusions of its Inaugural Retreat with the APRM which took place from 19 to 21 December 2021, in Durban, KwaZulu Natal Province.⁵ The outcome of the session was adopted in the form of a [Communiqué](#).

In addition to adopting the Conclusions of the Inaugural Joint Retreat and endorsing their reference as "eThekweni Conclusions", a key outcome of the session was the decision to institutionalise the holding of the Joint Retreat, on an annual basis.

Council also used the session as an opportunity to take note of the importance of inviting key stakeholders such as the [Panel of the Wise](#), the Pan-African

⁵ The session was attended by Tesfaye Yilma Sabo, Permanent Representative of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Co-Chair of the Inaugural Joint Retreat and Chairperson of the PSC for December 2021, and the representative of the APRM delegated by Prof. Eddy Maloka, Chief Executive Officer of the APRM.

Network of the Wise and FemWise to the second annual joint retreat, in order to ensure an enhanced and collaborative approach to conflict prevention in the continent.

Relevant previous PSC decisions:

Communiqué of the 914th Session: the 914th PSC session convened on 05 March 2020 was the first time where the Council requested the AU Commission to organise a joint retreat of PSC and the APRM. As articulated in the Communiqué of the 914th meeting ([PSC/PR/COMM.\(CMXIV\)](#)), the joint retreat was conceptualised as a means to reflect on and discuss in depth, the country reviews of the APRM. Interestingly, the importance of inviting the Panel of the Wise, Pan-African Network of the Wise and FemWise was also noted at that session.

Communiqué of the 962nd Session: in the Communiqué of its 962nd session ([PSC/PR/COMM.\(CMLXII\)](#)), the PSC reiterated its request for the AU Commission to work in collaboration with the APRM Secretariat for the organisation of a joint retreat of the two organs, which could serve “as a forum for exchanging views and to engage on the various review reports undertaken to enhance early warning strategies and efforts aimed at addressing root causes of conflict relating in the Continent”.

THE PSC ENDORSES TWO POLICY INSTRUMENTS ON CHILD PROTECTION FOR ADOPTION BY STCDSS

At the 1070th session convened on 29 March 2022, the PSC considered two draft policies relevant for integrating child protection within AU’s framework for peace and security.⁶ The outcome of the session was adopted as a [Communiqué](#).

The first policy considered at the session was the draft policy on child protection in AU peace support operations (PSOs). The policy has the central purpose of outlining the preventive, responsive and remedial roles that need to be played by personnel of AU-mandated, authorised or endorsed PSOs in order to

⁶ The session was attended by representatives of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) and Save The Children International who have contributed to the development of the draft policies, as well as representative of the United Nations Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF).

protect children and ensure the rights of children in situations of armed conflicts, as well as their overall welfare throughout the lifespan of the particular PSO, are safeguarded.

The other policy tabled at PSC’s 1070th session is the draft policy on mainstreaming child protection in APSA. This presents the process through which child protection should be integrated into the various policies, procedures and practices of APSA Pillars and how it should be implemented throughout all stages of APSA, from conflict prevention, to management and resolution and post-conflict recovery and reconstruction.

The long road in the making of the two polices

The process for the development of these two policy instruments on child protection in the AU peace and security started when the PSC established protection of children as standing thematic agenda. But it was at its 994th session that it carried in a binding outcome document through a communiqué ([PSC/PR/COMM.\(CMXCIV\)](#)) that the PSC requested the AU Commission to institutionalise a child protection framework within the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and to develop a policy aimed at mainstreaming child protection at various levels of intervention.

The PSC had at its previous sessions on ‘children affected by armed conflicts’ (CAAC), emphasised the importance of integrating child protection within AU peace and security agenda.

Relevant previous PSC decisions:

Press Statement of the 434th Session: in the Press Statement of its 434th session convened on 8 May 2014 ([PSC/PR/BR.\(CDXXXIV\)](#)), the Council highlighted the need of institutionalising protection of children within the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) and security sector reform (SSR) programmes of member States as well as the importance of including approaches for rehabilitation of child soldiers in countries emerging from conflicts.

Press Statement of the 491st Session: in the session convened on 9 March 2015 ([PSC/PR/BR.\(CDXCI\)](#)), the PSC stressed the need for both pre-deployment and in-mission trainings for AU PSO personnel, on

prevention and combating of sexual exploitation and abuse of children in conflict situations.

Press Statement of the 706th Session: in addition to reiterating the importance of a child protection architecture within APSA, the 706th meeting held on 26 July 2017 ([PSC/PR/BR.\(DCCVI\)](#)) also highlighted a most crucial point: the need for enhanced cooperation among the various departments of the AU Commission including the 'Departments of Social Affairs, Political Affairs, Science and Technology and Peace and Security', in addressing issues pertaining to the protection of children in conflict settings.

Press Statement of the 757th Session: the 757th session held on 13 March 2018 ([PSC/PR/BR.\(DCCLVII\)](#)) points out the importance of ensuring that protection of children is addressed systematically throughout the 'design and mandate implementation stages of AU PSOs'. Moreover, it also emphasises the need of mainstreaming the wellbeing of children into relevant components of AU peacekeeping policies, strategies, training and briefing programmes.

Beyond the PSC, the AU Assembly also adopted decisions requesting the development of such policies.

Relevant AU Assembly decisions:

Assembly/AU/Dec.753(XXXIII): At its 33rd Ordinary Session, the Assembly requested the AU Commission to 'develop a comprehensive policy on child protection in AU peace support operations'.

Assembly/AU/Dec.718(XXXII): AU Assembly endorsed the decision of the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) of its 706th session held on 26 July 2017, and requested the AU Commission to 'explore ways to strengthen the existing AU and RECs/RMs mechanism on child protection and on that basis, develop a child protection architecture for the Continent as a sub-aspect of APSA, to be considered and adopted by the PSC'.

Key actionable decisions requiring follow up

Having considered these two draft policies at its 1070th session, the PSC requested the AU Commission to submit both to the Specialized Technical Committee for Defence, Safety and Security (STCDSS) for its consideration and adoption.

At its **14th Ordinary Meeting held on 12 May 2022, the STCDSS considered and adopted both policies.** The Declaration of the 14th Ordinary Meeting of the STCDSS is to be submitted to the 36th Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly which will be taking place in February 2023. The two policies will become official AU policy instruments once endorsed by the Assembly. The PSC may also at its next deliberation on the CAAC agenda, endorse the adoption of the policies.

AS TENSION RUNS HIGH BETWEEN RUSSIA AND THE WEST OVER THE WAR ON UKRAINE, COUNCIL EXPRESSED ITS CONCERN OVER RISING RISK OF USE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

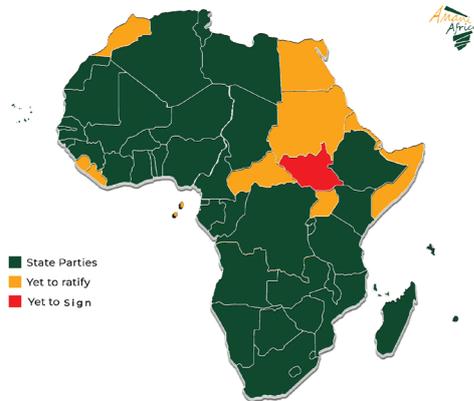
PSC convened its 1071st session on 31 March 2022 to discuss the implementation of the African Nuclear-Weapon Free-Zone Treaty, otherwise known as the Pelindaba Treaty.⁷ The session happened within the context of PSC's request of the AU Commission and the African Commission on Nuclear Energy (AFCONe), at its 763rd meeting held on 10 April 2018, to annually brief the Council on the 'status of the implementation of the Pelindaba Treaty and the activities of AFCONe'. The outcome of the session was adopted as [communiqué](#).

On the Pelindaba treaty

The Africa Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty, Pelindaba treaty, which is named after South Africa's central nuclear research complex, is one of the five treaties on regional Nuclear-Weapons-Free-Zones that came within the broader context of global initiative to strengthen the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation norms. While the treaty aims at consolidating and strengthening efforts towards nuclear disarmament, nonproliferation and peaceful application of nuclear science and technology, AFCONe is established in accordance with article 12

⁷ Acting Executive Secretary of the African Commission on Nuclear Energy (AFCONe) delivered the main presentation and the PSC also received statements from the representatives of the United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

of the same treaty as a compliance mechanism. As shown below, 43 African countries have become state parties to the treaty since its opening for signature in 1996.



Map: Status of signature and ratification of the Pelindaba Treaty

As highlighted in the presentation from [AFCON](#), the session also came amid growing concerns expressed during the past few years over rising risks of use of nuclear weapons due to lack of dialogue and increasing mistrust and suspicion in the relationship of countries possessing nuclear weapons. Additionally, recent years have witnessed backsliding in commitments towards the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons with the rise of nuclear rivalry and modernization of nuclear armaments while others are adding new types and/or increasing the role they serve in national strategy and public statements. The war on Ukraine further triggered the risk of nuclear escalation. On 27 February 2022, Russia's President Vladimir Putin made a cryptic order to his defense chiefs to put the country's deterrence forces to be placed on a 'special regime of combat duty', accusing the West of taking unfriendly posture towards Russia following the outbreak of war on Ukraine.

Against the background of these worrying developments, Council, during its 1071st session, expressed its 'deep concern' over 'the possible use of nuclear weapons in the world' and highlighted how such developments could weaken the objectives of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and undermine peace, security and humanitarian situation in the world, particu countries to find 'amicable means of resolving their differences and protecting the populations from the impact of nuclear weapons'. Previously, Council also

expressed similar concern, at its 763rd session held on 10 April 2018, noting the 'slow pace of nuclear disarmament and the rising tensions among nuclear-weapon possessor states' and its impact undermining confidence in the nonproliferation nuclear weapons and the reduction of nuclear arsenals.

Key actionable decisions requiring follow up

Although the continent of Africa is free from any nuclear weapons, it would remain at the receiving end of the nuclear escalation and cannot be spared from its consequences, and hence should be at the forefront of the push towards strengthening nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation regime. Accordingly, apart from reaffirming 'the urgency to attain the universality of the treaty of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons (NPT), as well as the implementation of the resolution adopted by the 1995 review and extension conference, the PSC encouraged Member States

to participate in the First Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons scheduled for June 2022, including as observers,

to participate at the 10th Review Conference of the NPT scheduled for August 2022 and at the 4th Conference of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia scheduled for July 2022.

Considering that Africa has enormous needs and increasing demands for energy, including providing access to more than half of African populations who lack electricity, the PSC session also focused on Africa's right and interest in the use of nuclear energy. Against the background of its position expressed in its 763rd session where it reaffirmed the 'inalienable right of all parties to apply chemical, biological and nuclear science and technology for peaceful civilian purposes', the PSC

Requested AFCONE, working with the Commission and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and other partners, to continue to mobilize resources, including technical expertise, to build the capacities of the relevant agencies of the Member States to promote the use of nuclear science and technology for peaceful and developmental purposes.

For the effective functioning of AFCON, the PSC

encouraged States Parties:

States Parties to the Treaty to fulfil their financial obligations and ensure the timely implementation of the decision of the 4th Ordinary Session of the Conference of States Parties to the Treaty of Pelindaba held in March 2018, in order to enable AFCONE to discharge its mandate with the required efficiency and effectiveness, and to promote nuclear science and technology on the Continent.

Other PSC activities during the month

In March, the PSC was engaged in two key activities in addition to convening its various sessions. The first one of these was the reflection forum on unconstitutional changes of government (UCG) convened in Accra, Ghana from 15 to 17 March. The forum was initiated upon the Council's decision at its 1061st session held on 27 January 2022, under the theme "Promoting Constitutionalism, Democracy and Inclusive Governance to Strengthen Peace, Security and Stability in Africa" to hold a brainstorming seminar the PSC and other relevant stakeholders on UCG. The concerning resurgence in UCG noted in 2021 was what mainly informed Council's decision to have an in-depth reflection on the issue. The reflection forum has resulted in the adoption of the Accra Declaration on UCG in Africa that served as the foundation document for the AU Assembly extraordinary summit held in Malabo for addressing, among others, unconstitutional changes of government.

The other activity Council conducted during the month was the induction/orientation of newly-elected members of the PSC, which took place from 23 to 25 March, in Maseru, Lesotho. As captured in [the report](#), the induction served to acquaint new and returning PSC member States whose terms have commenced as of 01 April 2022 with the mandates, powers, functions and working mechanisms of the Council as well as the nature of working relations between the Council and other stakeholders including within the framework of the AU Commission. The Induction Report was considered and endorsed by the PSC at its 1077th session convened on 14 April 2022.



MEDIA AND RESEARCH SERVICES

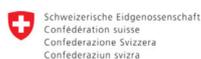
ABOUT AMANI AFRICA

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.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Amani Africa wishes to express its gratitude to the Embassy of Finland in Addis Ababa for the support in the production of this Monthly Digest. We also thank the Government of Switzerland, the Embassy of Ireland, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Open Society Foundations for the additional support.



ADDRESS

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