

THE PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL IN 2022: THE YEAR IN REVIEW

AMANI AFRICA

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I INTRODUCTION

The focus of this review is the presentation of analysis of the work of the PSC in 2022 drawing on the data and research work carried out on the PSC in 2022. This review is however set within the overall context of the prevailing peace and security landscape of the continent. Accordingly, our review of 2022 additionally presents overview of the state of peace and security highlighting the major issues of concern in Africa in the year and the trends and dynamics arising from these issues.

There are various developments of interest concerning the PSC that range from the change in the composition of the PSC, its working methods and decision-making dynamics to how the PSC and regional actors working with it addressed (or failed to address) the peace and security challenges facing the continent.

As the analysis below reveals, the peace and security situation on the continent remains bleak with the deteriorating security and humanitarian situation showing no sign of abating. Yet, as developments in some of the cases the PSC is actively seized with show, it is not all doom and gloom. Hopeful developments were also registered, including those that demonstrate the continuing importance of the continental body, at the very least, in providing the cover necessary for peace and security diplomacy.

II 2022: A YEAR THAT SUSTAINED THE BAD AND THE UGLY OF THE PREVIOUS YEARS WITH SOME ADDITIONS

2022 was in so many ways a continuation of the deteriorating peace and security situations witnessed during 2020 and 2021 on the continent, despite pockets of relative improvements in some conditions. The PSC at its 1073rd session and subsequently at its 1084th session expressed deep concern over the continued prevalence of violent conflicts and threats to peace and security in Africa.

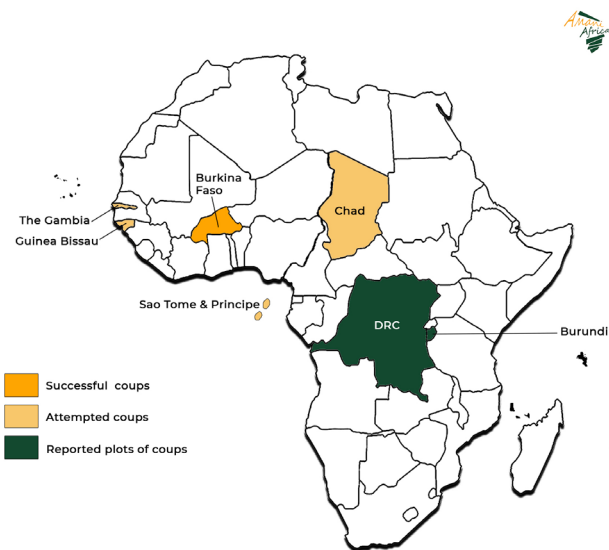
As in the past several years, conflicts involving terrorism happen to be the most dominant source of threat to peace and security in Africa in 2022, although other conflicts notably the one in northern Ethiopia and eastern DRC also drew enormous attention. With five of the ten countries most affected by terrorism in Africa, the shift to Africa of the epicentre of terrorism in the world persisted to consolidate during 2022.

Despite some limited pockets of improvement, overall conflicts involving terrorism not only remain as persistent as in previous years but also, in the context of the Sahel, further deteriorated. The expansion in the geographic spread of the threat has continued unabated in 2022. Of particular significance in this respect is the threat of expansion of conflicts involving terrorism from the Sahel to the littoral states of West Africa. Signifying the continuing expansion of terrorism in the continent including emerging signs of terrorist activities in littoral states of West Africa, Ghana's President [warned](#) in a meeting last November that the 'worsening situation ...threatens to engulf the entire West Africa.'¹ Incidents of attacks have been reported in Benin, Cot d'Ivoire, and Togo. Beyond the geographic spread and most worryingly, deadly violence in territories affected by conflicts involving terrorism has surged by 22 percent in 2022, with fatalities surging by as much as 50 percent.²

¹ Al Jazeera, 'Sahel conflict could 'engulf West Africa: Ghana President, 22 November, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/11/22/sahel-conflict-could-engulf-west-africa-ghana-president>

² Africa Centre for Strategic Studies, 'Fatalities from militant Islamist violence in Africa surged by nearly 50 percent, 6 February 2023, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/fatalities-from-militant-islamist-violence-in-africa-surge-by-nearly-50-percent/>

Military coup or threat of it also remained prominent in the peace and security landscape of the continent in 2022, with such events during the year pushing the number of coups, attempted coups and plots of coups during 2021-2022 to 14. Burkina Faso experienced two coups and a threat of another, all in 2022. There were additional four other coup attempts. These were in Guinea Bissau (February), Sao Tome & Principe (November), Chad (December) and The Gambia (December). To these one should add the two coup plots in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (February) and Burundi (September). If 2021 was a year characterized by an epidemic of coups, 2022 will be remembered as the year with the largest number of incidents of coups attempts or plots (nine) since the turn of the century.



2022 Incidents of coups, attempted coups
and reported plots of coups

2022 was not also free from other forms of constitutional and democratic governance crises including violent electoral contestations and protests and riots as well as perpetration of human rights violations and mass atrocities. Thus, the PSC itself in the communique of its 1098th session expressed concern over 'the trend of democracy reversals, threats facing constitutionalism and the protection of human rights in the continent.' Incidents of election related violence were observed in a number of countries, albeit to varying scale and intensity. Somalia's was the most protracted electoral process punctuated by sporadic violence, although in the end it culminated in a peaceful transfer of power to a newly elected President.

In terms of protests, Sudan witnessed the most sustained and organized mass protests throughout 2022 against the October 2021 coup and the military rule. This was a protest movement that sustained its peaceful character despite deadly crackdown by security forces against peaceful protesters. Sierra Leone was also affected by deadly protests but this was over rising cost of living as opposed to demands for end of military rule. Demands to end of military rule also led to protests and violent crackdown on peaceful protests in Guinea and Chad as well. Tunisia, experienced political and constitutional uncertainty and mass protests over dissolution of parliament and the controversial constitutional review pushed by the president. Constitutional crisis has begun brewing in the Central African Republic (CAR) over contested constitutional amendment that proposed, among others, to extend the term limit of the incumbent president of the country. This crisis is sure to persist into 2023 and complicate further the already complex transition in the country.

Additionally, the protracted conflicts affecting some parts of the continent such as CAR, South Sudan, Somalia, Libya also persisted in 2022, albeit with changing dynamics and varying degrees of intensity. Conflicts involving armed rebellion and civil war also remain persistent as reflected in the unresolved separatist conflict in Cameroon and, the conflict in the Tigray region of Ethiopia that persisted during 2022 with its enormous toll on civilians in Tigray and neighbouring regions of Ethiopia. 2022 also saw the resurgence of the M23 rebellion in Eastern DRC, exacerbating the insecurity of this conflict affected region of the DRC.

While most conflicts, even when they are mostly intra-state, are regionalized & involve varying degrees of involvement of neighbouring countries, outright inter-state conflict remains rare. Yet, 2022 saw a threat of the re-emergence of inter-state confrontation with the heightening of tension, involving military incidents, between Rwanda and the DRC. This is associated with the outbreak of fighting involving the M23.

Transnational dimensions, one of the features of conflicts on the continent particularly those in the Sahel, Lake Chad Basin and the Great Lakes regions is the fact that they also tend to be trans-regional hence affecting more than one regional political and

economic block.

Related to but separate from this regionalized character of intra-state conflicts is also the growing internationalization of such conflicts. This regionalization and internationalization of intra-state conflicts takes not only proxy conflicts entailing the involvement of neighbouring countries through various forms of support of one of the parties to the conflict but also intervention of old and emerging powers. The conflicts in the Sahel, the CAR, Libya and those in Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan exhibited various kinds of intervention involving the US, France, China, Russia, UAE and Turkey. The interventions take various forms including supply of arms, deployment of troops and/or private security companies, provision of funds and the use of sanctions.

The impact of the illicit acquisition and circulation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and asymmetric methods of warfare such as the use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in various conflict settings also persisted in 2022. Beyond SALW and IEDs, one of the major dynamics of conflicts in Africa in 2022 involved the increase in use of the internet and other platforms of new communications technologies involving misinformation, disinformation, recruitment and incitement of violence, use of virtual currencies and new systems of weapons such as drones.³

The other feature of conflicts in 2022, as in previous years, has to do with the fact that, civilians have been made to bear much of the brunt of the violence. This is true not only in conflicts involving terrorist violence but also those taking the form of civil war. Illustrating the shocking scale of the spike in violence in conflicts involving terrorism, in 2022 fatalities in such conflicts increased by almost 50 percent. According to the AU's African Centre on the Study of Terrorism 2022 Mid-Year Africa Terrorism Trends Analysis, 433 out of the 699 terrorist attacks perpetrated during the first half of 2022 were launched against civilians and out of the 5,412 deaths that were recorded during the period, 3,517 were civilian deaths. Apparently worse in its impact on civilians than the conflicts involving terrorist violence is the war in Ethiopia. According to the AU mediator for the war in Ethiopia, former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, '[t]he destruction caused in the

Tigray region which was the main theater of the war was very high in human and material losses. It has been estimated that no fewer than 600,000 people died directly in battle or as a result of disease and the lack of access to humanitarian aid.'⁴

Relating to the heavy toll of conflicts on civilians is the perpetration of mass atrocities and the conduct of hostilities in violation of applicable norms including international human rights and international humanitarian law rules such as those involving the use of sexual violence as weapon of war. According to the 2021 [United Nations Secretary-General report on Conflict Related Sexual Violence \(CRSV\)](#), countries across Africa reported the highest number of CRSV cases worldwide. In CAR alone, United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) verified cases of CRSV affecting 379 women and 327 girls, representing a doubling in the number of reported cases compared with the previous year 2020. The report also highlighted the pervasiveness of CRSV in the war in Northern Ethiopia. Similarly, in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO) documented 1,016 cases of conflict-related sexual violence, affecting 544 women, 459 girls, 7 boys and 6 men. These trends continued during 2022 as well.

Another aspect of the peace and security trend of the continent is the persistence and, in some cases, further deterioration of the grave humanitarian situation on the continent. The number of displaced people on the continent surged to 36 million, according to the report from the AU commission to be presented to the AU Summit. As the report pointed out, drawing on data from IDMC, Africa alone accounts for 11.6 million newly Internally Displaced People (IDPs) triggered by conflict and violence- the highest figure ever recorded.

This huge surge is in part a result of the emergence of the conflict involving the M23 in Eastern DRC and the deterioration of existing ones. In 2022, the situation of displacement in Burkina Faso, compounded by the coup induced political instability, has shown further deterioration with the continuing spike of violent attacks in the country driving more people to flee their homes between January and July 2022 than during

³ See communiqué of the 1085th session of the PSC, the Council noting 'with serious concern the new threats posed by the illegal use of new weaponries'.

⁴ Obasanjo, *Ethiopian civil war: How we brokered peace*, available on <https://dailytrust.com/ethiopia-civil-war-how-we-brokered-peace-obasanjo/>

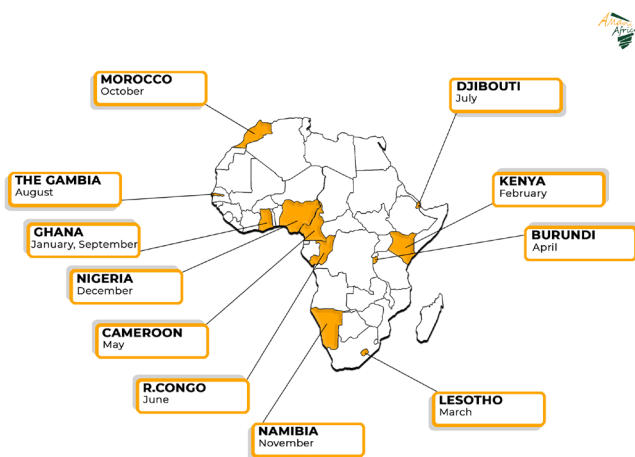
the entire year of 2021. Across the wider Sahel region extending over Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger, over 4.8 million people are estimated by the UN to have fled their homes due to violence including jihadist attacks and communal conflicts. In northern Mozambique, after a respite in violence between mid-July to late August, attacks have resumed displacing over 38,000 people according to the data from August/September 2022.

In broad terms, the foregoing are the features of the peace and security context in which the PSC operated during 2022.

III ACTIVITIES OF THE PSC IN 2022

Highlights from the activities of the PSC in 2022

In 2022, the periodic election of all PSC members for two-year and three-year terms was held.⁵ Following the election of new members and re-election of returning members in February, the newly reconstituted PSC assumed work from the beginning of April. The alphabetic rotation of chairs has been fully restored during 2022 showing notable improvement from previous two years when rotation of chairs using alphabetic order was lacking.

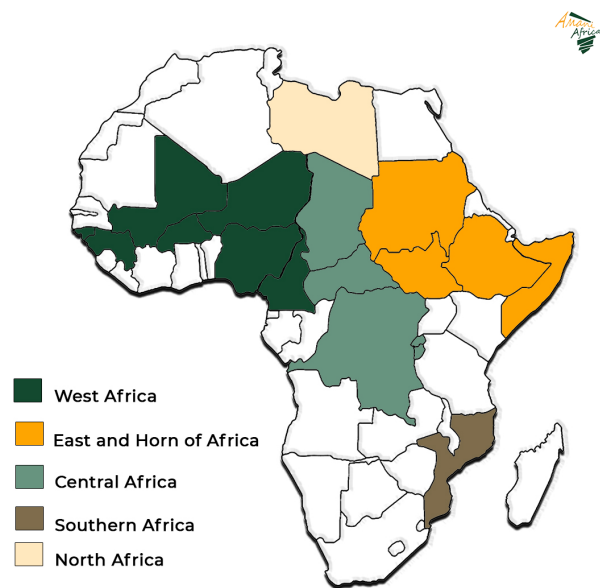


PSC Chairs of 2022

⁵ For more details on the election of PSC members in 2022, see Amani Africa's Policy Briefs on '[2022 Elections of the PSC: Overview of the Process and List of Candidates](#)' and '[2022 Election of the 15 Members of the PSC: Conduct and Outcome of the Elections](#)'.

The sessions the PSC convened during the year were mainly held at Ambassadorial level. Seven sessions⁶ were held at Ministerial level this year, which is less by three from the previous year. There were also no sessions held at Heads of State and Government level in 2022, showing another decrease from 2021 where two Heads of State and Government level meetings were held.

As demonstrated in the map below, conflict and crisis situations that featured in PSC's agenda during the year were predominantly a continuation of its previous engagements and concentrated in regions that have dominated the PSC's agenda over the past several years. The situation in Guinea Bissau, although not new to PSC's agenda, was considered in December 2022 after an interval of over two years, having been last considered by the PSC in January 2020. Increasing political tensions in Guinea Bissau including the attempted coup earlier in the year that led to the deployment of an ECOWAS mission and the intensification of tensions between the President and the Assembly prompted the PSC to revisit the situation.



Pictorial representation of conflict situations addressed by the PSC – 2022

⁶ The sessions held at ministerial level during 2022 were: the 1058th meeting committed to a General Debate of the PSC and the A3+1 on African Issues in the UNSC Agenda; the 1063rd session on Nexus between Urbanisation, Women, Peace and Security; 1094th session on the Situation in Somalia and operations of ATMIS; 1107th session on Preventing and Combating Terrorism and Violent Extremism in the Continent; 1111th session on Development and Deradicalisation as Levers to Counter Terrorism and Violent Extremism; 1114th session on Climate Change, Peace and Security Nexus; and 1119th session on the Situation in Mozambique and the Operations of SAMIM.

Activities of the PSC in 2022

The trend observed in the resurgence of coups throughout 2021 and well into 2022 also prompted the PSC to increase its engagement on governance related issues and their nexus with peace and security. This was demonstrated through, among others, the increased frequency and number of sessions convened in relation to governance issues. While the PSC convened only 3 thematic sessions dedicated to elections and governance issues in 2021, seven sessions were committed to this theme in 2022, although this in part has also to do with the change in the composition of the PSC members following the election in February 2022. The convening of a brainstorming session on Unconstitutional change of government (UCG) which took place in Accra, Ghana from 15 to 17 March 2022 and the adoption of the 'Accra Declaration on UCG in Africa' highlighted that the unprecedented upsurge of military coups needs more than a business as usual response. The PSC's engagement with AU organs dealing with governance issues has also been another important development reflecting its increased attention to such issues.

Another new trend observed in 2022 was the increased engagement of the PSC with other AU organs and institutions. Establishing the importance of coordination and collaboration between the various organs of the AU with their different mandates, the PSC held two inaugural consultations with AU organs [the PRC Sub-Committee on Human Rights, Democracy and Governance (HRDG) and the Africa Governance Architecture (AGA) Platform Members. The PSC also held an inaugural consultative meeting with Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) paving the way for enhancing and expanding its engagement with and harnessing of the resources of non-state actors in pursuit of leading the implementation of the objectives and principles of the PSC Protocol.

Total Number of Sessions – 71						
Total Number of Agenda Items – 92						
Country/Region Specific Agenda Items						
North Africa	East & Horn of Africa	Central Africa	West Africa	North Africa	*Central & West Africa	*East, Central & West Africa
1	17	5	10	2	1	1
Thematic Agenda Items						
APSA Tools and Pillars	Consultative Meetings	Specific Category of People	Elections and Governances	APSA Tools and Pillars		
6	7	8	7	20		

Sessions/Agenda Items of the PSC – 2022

In 2022, the PSC convened 71 sessions. Out of these, 16 had two agenda items⁷ while one had three agenda items.⁸ In total, the PSC deliberated on 92 agenda items, showing over ten percent increase from the previous year where 78 substantive agenda items were considered.

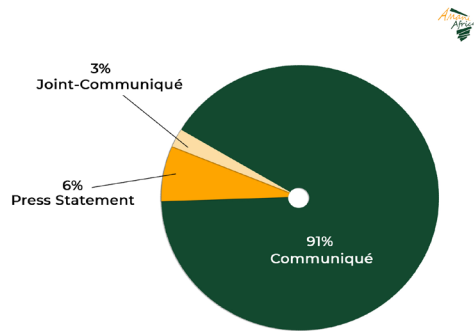
Showing a continuation of the trend that has been developing in recent years, particularly in 2021, more agenda items were committed to thematic issues as compared to country/region specific ones.

Based on the publicly available outcome documents, the chart below shows the format in which they were adopted.

⁷ The sessions with two agenda items convened during 2022 were: the 1057th; 1060th; 1064th; 1069th; 1077th; 1081st; 1097th; 1116th; 1117th; 1120th; 1121st; 1122nd; 1126th; 1128th; 1129th; and the session convened on 14 September to have PSC inaugural consultative meeting with CSOs and an update briefing on operationalisation of AU Peace Fund (unnumbered session).

⁸

The session with three agenda items convened in 2022 was the 1062nd session which took place on 31st January 2022.



Type of Outcome Documents – 2022

Regional distribution of PSC's activities in 2022



Regional distribution and number of sessions on situations in different regions

Similar to previous years, the East and Horn of Africa region dominated the PSC agenda in 2022. As the above data shows, 43% of the country/region specific sessions were committed to situations within this region. About 30% of the country/region specific sessions addressed situations in west Africa, while central Africa received 19% of sessions. Southern Africa received increased attention from the previous year – no sessions were devoted to this region in 2021 despite the increased insecurity in Cabo Delgado region of Mozambique. The PSC was able to commit a couple sessions to the situation in Mozambique in 2022. North Africa saw a slight decrease in 2022 as compared to 2021. Overall, North Africa, along with Southern Africa, received the lowest engagement of the PSC, highlighting relatively better conditions of peace and security in these regions.

In a new problematic format used during this year, the PSC also convened two sessions that lamped together political transitions in countries across different

regions. These were the 1076th session assessing transitions in countries in east, central and west Africa (Burkina Faso, Chad, Guinea, Mali and Sudan) and the 1106th session following up on transitions in central and west Africa (Burkina Faso, Chad, Guinea, and Mali).

IV PSC ON THE SITUATIONS IN THE EAST AND HORN OF AFRICA

East and Horn of Africa has continued to receive the most attention from the PSC in 2022. The PSC dedicated 18 sessions to situations in the region, including PSC's 1076th session that addressed the political transition in Sudan, Burkina Faso, Mali, and Guinea. The focus of PSC's engagement in this region were on the transition of AMISOM to the new authorized AU Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) and the operationalization of the reconfiguration of ATMIS, the conflict in northern part of Ethiopia, the political crisis in Sudan, and the transition in South Sudan.

As a further reflection of the most attention it dedicated to this region, the PSC undertook field mission to Somalia and South Sudan. Yet, its plan of undertaking its third field mission in the region by traveling to Sudan did not take place as envisaged due to the reluctance of Sudan's military authorities to receive the delegation.⁹

Disaggregating the figure, out of the 17 sessions dedicated to the region, the situation that received the most attention with seven sessions was Somalia/ AMISOM/ATMIS. Compared to 2021, the number of sessions on the situation in Ethiopia increased by more than two folds.¹⁰ South Sudan also received a better engagement of the PSC as compared to last year when the number of sessions on that country increased from one in 2021 to three in 2022. PSC met on the situation in Sudan three times, and held one separate session on Abyei.

⁹ See Amani Africa, *Monthly Digest on the PSC* (February 2022).

¹⁰ While this is a marked increase from 2021, it remains far less than the number of sessions by the UN Security Council.

Number of sessions on Sudan consistently dropped over the last few years even though the country has been reeling in a wave of political crises. PSC met 10 times at the height of the coup-induced political crisis in 2019 when the military seized power by overthrowing Sudan's long-time leader, Omar al-Bashir in April of that year. That number decreased to six in 2020, to four in 2021 and to three in 2022. The downward trend in number of dedicated sessions however does not correspond to the situation on the ground as Sudan was locked in a dangerous political stalemate characterized by sustained peaceful protests calling for civilian transitional government and multiple incidents of deadly crackdown on peaceful protesters by security forces throughout the year in review.

Somalia and AMISOM/ATMIS

Despite dedicating most of its sessions and a field mission to Somalia and AMISOM/ATMIS, the PSC held one session less than it did in 2021. One of the main highlights of the year under review is indeed the PSC's decision to reconfigure AMISOM into ATMIS after 15 years of operations. On 8 March 2022, during its 1068th session, PSC 'authorized' ATMIS as of 1 April 2022, which is expected to end by 31 December 2024 upon the full assumption of security responsibilities by the Somali Security Forces (SSF). The UN Security Council also adopted Resolution 2628 (2022) authorizing the reconfiguration of AMISOM into ATMIS.

PSC adopted one of its longest communiques ever with 33 paragraphs capturing various aspects of the reconfiguration and phased implementation of its mandate. It set out the elements of the mandate, strategic objectives and tasks, the four-phased approach to the transfer of security responsibilities to the SSF, command-and-control structure, and the role and expectations from key actors such as the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and international partners notably the UN and EU.

Pursuant to PSC communique of 1068th session as well as UN Security Council resolution 2628, ATMIS military component maintains current AMISOM size of 18,586 troops during Phase I, and the first drawdown of 2000 troops was expected to take place at the end of this Phase slated for 31 December 2022. Amani Africa indicated in its [monthly digest](#) reviewing the transfer from AMISOM to ATMIS the implementation

of the phased drawdown would not be linear but contingent on developments on the ground including security and preparation of the SSF at the requisite number and capacity to take over responsibility. Not surprisingly, although it came late, the FGS requested the postponement of the first drawdown scheduled for December. The PSC in the 1121st session it convened on 11 November expressed support for the FGS request to extend the timeline for the drawdown of the 2000 troops from 31 December 2022 to 30 June 2023 while maintaining the exit date of 31 December 2024 by ATMIS. Furthermore, PSC directed the Chairperson of the Commission to transmit the communique to the UN Security Council for endorsement of the revised timeline, which the later accordingly adopted resolution 2670 on 21 December 2021 that 'exceptionally' extended authorization of the mission with its current strength until 30 June 2023.

One of the recurrent themes that featured throughout PSC's sessions on Somalia in the year under review remain the financing of ATMIS. Its 1075th session was particularly dedicated to the financing issue where PSC noted with 'deep concern' the commencement of the mission without the required resources. Despite the direct funding by the EU (€120 million) and to some extent, UK (€29.6 million), the mission's budget deficit for the year 2022 was around €25.8 million. With the aim to address the budget shortfall, PSC sought different options in various of its sessions including an appeal to the UN Security Council to hold a special session on financing ATMIS and the SSF (1075th session); a call on EU and other partners to establish a financial support package (1075th session); request on AU Commission and UN, along with IGAD and partners, to jointly organize international pledging conference by March 2023 (1121st session). Beyond the budget deficit for 2022, PSC stressed, in all its communiques adopted at the sessions on ATMIS, the need for accessing UN assessed contributions for sustainable and predictable funding necessary for the effective execution of the mandate of the mission.

The other interesting highlight of the year in relation to Somalia/ATMIS is PSC's backing of Somalia's request for the lifting of sanctions regime (arms embargo) on Somalia, which has been in place since 1992. During its 1094th session of 27 July, PSC appealed to the UN Security Council to reconsider the request from the FGS for lifting the arms embargo with the view to ensuring that the country is sufficiently equipped to

address security threats as it prepares to take over security responsibilities from ATMIS by 2024. In the year under review, in addition to Somalia, the PSC also backed CAR and South Sudan in their request for the lifting of the arms embargo imposed by the UN Security Council. It is worth noting that for the first time the issue of sanctions including arms embargo became one of the agenda items of the 2022 annual consultative meeting between the PSC and the UN Security Council.

Ethiopia

After a very timid engagement in 2021, the PSC paid increased attention to the war in northern Ethiopia in 2022. It dedicated its 1064th, 1097th, 1115th and 1120th sessions to this situation.¹¹ It is to be recalled that conflict erupted in Tigray region of Ethiopia in November 2020 and PSC's engagement on the situation has been minimal for the most part of the conflict despite the gravity and seriousness of the conflict.

PSC did not adopt an outcome document for its 1064th session that took place on 10 February. But, as discussed in detail in the Monthly Digest on the PSC for February 2022, the briefing note that the High-Representative for the Horn of Africa presented to the PSC was comprehensive in highlighting the difficult salient issues including the toll the war was having on civilians, the blockade on humanitarian access and the disruption of services for people in Tigray.¹² Amani Africa learned from members of the PSC at the time that there was no opportunity for engagement with the High-Representative after the delivery of his briefing, which may partly account for the lack of outcome document on the session. In opting for not having an outcome document, the PSC failed to do the least it could – to make a pronouncement on how the AU play a part towards addressing the issues raised in the briefing.

¹¹ The agenda of two of the four sessions (1064th and 1097th) were framed as 'updated briefing on the situation in the Horn of Africa', which became a euphemism for the war in Ethiopia the focus of the sessions were entirely on that situation. The rest two sessions – 1115th and 1120th – were held on the AU-led Peace Process and a briefing on the agreement for lasting peace through Permanent Cessation of Hostilities between the federal government and Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), respectively.

¹² See Amani Africa, Monthly Digest on the PSC (February 2022) 2-3.

The next meeting on the conflict in Tigray region of Ethiopia was during PSC's 1097th session, which was convened on 4 August, as plans for the holding of the session in earlier months did not materialize due to non-availability of the High-Representative. This session came just three weeks before the resumption of hostilities after the five-month lull from a precarious humanitarian truce the parties unilaterally declared in March 2022 collapsed. That session did not engage the apparent risk of the collapse of the humanitarian truce and missed the opportunity to avert the mounting tension from boiling over on 24 August. Indeed, the communique adopted was strikingly silent about the issues dividing the two sides over the flow of humanitarian assistance and the resumption of basic services to Tigray region and the lack of progress for starting peace talks, which together pushed the precarious truce to the breaking point. Yet, commendably, the PSC told the parties to the conflict that there was 'no viable military solution to the current situation in the Tigray region.'

On the other hand, PSC convened its 1115th session on 21 October ahead of the launch of the AU-led peace process in Pretoria, South Africa, on 24 October. The session was not envisaged in the program of work for the month and, might have been triggered by the proposed convening of UN Security Council's meeting on the same day. Although it came two months after the resumption of hostilities, the PSC in the communique it issued on that session was strong in its call for 'an immediate, comprehensive and unconditional ceasefire and the resumption of humanitarian services.' As the session also came after the AU Commission changed the format of the mediation structure on this conflict by expanding it into a panel as part of the effort to inject new momentum and credibility for the effort to start direct talks between the parties, the PSC also welcomed the newly constituted AU High-Level Panel, composed of Olusegun Obasanjo, former Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta, and Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, former Deputy President of South Africa and Panel of the Wise Member, to facilitate the peace talks.

The last session of the year on this war was convened on 9 November at the backdrop of two significant developments towards the peaceful resolution of the two-year long conflict. The first is the signing of peace agreement between the conflicting parties on 2 November after 10 days of negotiation in Pretoria while

the second is the follow-on meeting of senior military commanders on 7 November in Nairobi, Kenya on the implementation of part of the agreement that deals with disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration. In that session, PSC endorsed the peace agreement and 'strongly' urged the signatory parties to 'honor and fully implement the Agreement in its spirit and letter'.

South Sudan

The slight increase in PSC's engagement on South Sudan in 2022 from 2021 can be explained by the fact that the country was fast approaching the end-phase of the transition as the three-year transition period was originally slated to end in February 2023. Against that backdrop, the focus of the sessions was the status of progress in the implementation of the 2018 Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (RARCSS).

The first session of the year on South Sudan was 1060th session held on 25 January. One of the main outcomes of that session was PSC's call on the international community to lift the arms embargo and other sanctions imposed on the country. Despite this call and South Sudan's repeated request for the lifting of the sanctions, it is to be recalled that the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 2633(2022) in May extending for a year the sanctions regime imposed on South Sudan, including the arms embargo, travel ban and financial measures. Kenya also flagged up its concern over UN Security Council's failure to consider the call by AU as well as IGAD for the lifting of the sanction.

PSC also undertook field visit on the second anniversary of the formation of the Transitional Government, which was accordingly undertaken from 22 to 25 February 2022.¹³

PSC's 1092nd session held on 11 July highlighted key outstanding transitional tasks that the South Sudanese parties need to act upon, including the graduation and deployment of the Necessary Unified

Force (NUF), the ratification of the Permanent Constitution-Making Bill and electoral laws, the reconstitution of the National Constitutional Review Commission and the National Elections Commission. Furthermore, PSC encouraged the Reconstituted Transitional Government of National Unity (RTGoNU) to expedite the long-awaited roadmap that outlines the timelines and plans for implementation of outstanding transitional tasks. Accordingly, on 4 August 2022, all signatories to the revitalized agreement adopted the Roadmap on the Outstanding Issues in the implementation of the Agreement that extended the transitional period by 24 months up until 22 February 2025.

Under its 1123rd session convened on 30 November, PSC commended signatories to the revitalized agreement for forging the Roadmap while urging them to work towards completing all outstanding tasks within the stipulated timelines and not later than February 2025. However, the extension of the transitional period received criticism from the Troika (Norway, UK, and US) who expressed their dissatisfaction over the South Sudanese leaders for extending their time in power without delivering on their commitment to the Agreement.

The graduation of the Necessary Unified Forces (NUF) in August and November was the other critical aspect of the revitalized agreement where some progress was registered, and this was welcomed by the PSC at its 1123rd session.

The importance of post-conflict reconstruction and Development programs and peacebuilding interventions were stressed in all the sessions in the context of South Sudan. Although it is not accompanied by implementation, the PSC showed ambition to use a wide range of tools. These include:

- reactivating AU Ad-hoc High-Level Committee for South Sudan (C5),
- mandating the AU PCRDC Centre to prioritize South Sudan amongst its priority areas of focus,
- deploying AU-IGAD-UN Trilateral Team on the needs assessment and evaluation of the electoral and permanent constitution making process,

¹³ It is important to note that the PSC did not consider and adopt the report of the field visit yet though this was required pursuant to the PSC manual on its working methods as well as its established practice.

- utilizing the Panel of the Wise and the Champion on Peacebuilding and PCRD,
- organizing international pledging conference to mobilize financial resources for the South Sudan Reconstruction Fund,
- reactivating the AU High-Level Implementation Panel for Sudan and South Sudan (AUHIP), and
- undertaking solidarity visit to South Sudan in February 2023.

While the ambition for a more robust PCRD engagement is commendable, this case also illustrates the mismatch between ambition and reality that has come to characterize the work of the PSC. Among others, this decision does not envisage the financial and human resources on the basis of which each of these specific elements are to be realized.

South Sudan's is also a situation that requires continuous peace-making, conflict prevention and peacebuilding work particularly at local levels. This was evident from the threat of collapse that the RTGoNU faced and the spike in so called sub-national conflicts, including notably the violence that erupted since August in Upper Nile that led to killing of hundreds and displacement of more than 20,000 others. The PSC did not pay the level of attention that these conflict dynamics deserve considering their impact on the civilian population and on implementation of the RARCSS.

Sudan

PSC's engagement on the situation in Sudan remained low throughout 2022 despite the deterioration of the political, socio-economic, and security conditions of the country following the 25 October 2021 military coup. In 2019, PSC met ten times to discuss the crisis in Sudan/Darfur, most of them dedicated to address the political crisis precipitated by the April 2019 military coup. This number sharply dropped to three sessions in 2022, of which only two of them were stand-alone sessions on Sudan while the other one discussed the situation in Sudan together with other cases. PSC's low engagement on Sudan is not only against its own record of active involvement on the Sudan file but also does not confirm with its

own decision adopted at the 1041st session held in October 2021 to receive regular (monthly) updates on the evolution of the situation in the country.

On 25 January, at its 1060th session, PSC met to discuss the situation in Sudan, which was based on the report of the AU Commissioner for PAPS following his engagement with General Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan, Chairman of Sovereign Council, in Mid-January.

The session came at the backdrop of the formal launch of the 'UN facilitated intra-Sudanese political process' by the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS). Interestingly, while the PSC in that session noted the launch of the initiative, it also stressed the need for the AU to coordinate international efforts in the country, signalling the turf issue arising between AU and UN over who takes the lead in facilitating the consultation process to restore constitutional order in Sudan. Around end of January and early February, IGAD also showed interest to facilitate political dialogue among Sudanese parties by undertaking a fact-finding mission to Sudan. Subsequently, in April, the three sides agreed to coordinate efforts instead of going forward with parallel initiatives and formed AU-IGAD-UN Trilateral Mechanism. PSC, at the 1076th and 1117th PSC sessions held in April and November respectively, expressed its support to the Trilateral Mechanism.

Another important highlight of 1060th session was PSC's prescription for Sudan to hold credible elections within six to 12 months while reaffirming its position that the August 2019 Constitutional Declaration and the October 2020 Juba Peace Agreement should continue to guide the transition. Both the timeline it set and the reference to the 2019 Constitutional Declaration betrayed the fact that the PSC was far behind the curve. Its decision was greeted with rejection particularly from the civilian coalition and opposition parties.

On 2 November, at its 1117th session, PSC held its last discussion of the year on Sudan. One of the key elements of the Communique adopted on the session is the fact that the PSC noted the draft Constitutional Document initiated by the Sudan Bar Association (SBA), which garnered support from some of the key Sudanese actors including the Forces for Freedom and Change-Central Council (FFC-CC), as a potential single basis for negotiations. The PSC reiterated its

commitment to undertake a field mission to Sudan but did not specify the timeline for such a mission.

Subsequent to the session, the negotiation between military authorities and the FFC based on the draft Constitutional Document led to the signing of a Political Framework Agreement on 5 December. If the recent momentum leads to the appointment of a Prime Minister and the formation of a civilian government, Sudan may request the lifting of the sanction imposed by the AU on 26 October 2021. Such indication was made during the 48th ordinary session of IGAD Council of Ministers held on 30 November in Khartoum where the regional bloc 'advocated' for the reinstatement of the membership of Sudan to the AU. This may give Khartoum an incentive to welcome the long deferred field visit of the PSC and use it as an opportunity to get members of the PSC to support lifting of suspension expected to be requested at the end of the ongoing negotiations on pending items on the transition.

The few numbers of sessions that the PSC dedicated to the situation in Sudan and the fact that it was unable to undertake its field visit to the country are worrisome signals of declining influence of the AU in the situation in Sudan in general and the transitional process in particular since the end of the hybrid UN and AU Mission to Sudan (UNAMID). If the AU was not part of the trilateral process that serves as the formal platform for facilitating negotiation on the transition in Sudan and had it not suspended Sudan for the coup in October 2021, the PSC would have had even much less than its already depreciated influence in 2022.

Abyei

On 29 September, at its 1108th session, PSC discussed the political and security situation in the Abyei region for the first time since its 966th session in November 2020. Addressing the recent violent confrontations in the Abyei Administration and revamping the process to resolve the impasse on the final status of the contested area were the focus of PSC's engagement on the Abyei file at its 1108th session. In the context of slow pace of progress to resolve the status of Abyei and deteriorating socio-economic conditions as well as persisting violent clashes in the contested area, PSC highlighted three important activities that the AU Commission should act upon. These are: nominating

a facilitator for the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee (AJOC), one of the key elements of the 2011 Agreement on Temporary Arrangements for the Administration and Security of Abyei that was envisaged to provide political and administrative oversight; conduct a study of the root causes and triggers of the recurring instability of the region; and spearhead support for the socio-economic development of the region including through PCRDC centre.

Given that the Abyei file has not been receiving attention for quite some time, PSC agreed to hold a regular (biannual) briefing on the situation in Abyei. PSC also agreed to undertake a field mission to the area though it did not specify timeframe for the visit. If these decisions are properly followed, the regular briefing as well as the field mission are expected to bring the Abyei file back to the agenda of the PSC more during 2023.

Highlighting the continuing importance of the work of the AUHIP, PSC, during its 1108th session on Abyei expressed its expectation to receive a comprehensive report of the activities of AUHIP. During its 1123rd session that addressed the situation in South Sudan, PSC also requested the AU Commission to reactivate the AUHIP.

V PSC ON THE SITUATIONS IN THE CENTRAL AFRICA REGION

From the central Africa region, the situations that featured in PSC's agenda in 2022 were Chad, CAR, DRC and more broadly, the Great Lakes Region (GLR). The peace and security issues in the region which demanded PSC's attention during the year ranged from the complex political transition in Chad, to the growing threat of terrorism and continuing proliferation of armed groups in the GLR and the deterioration of the crisis in eastern DRC and its grave impact on regional relations.

In addition to sessions dedicated to situations in these countries and the region as a whole, the PSC also undertook a field mission to Burundi from 20 to 22 June 2022. The field mission was initially planned to cover the wider GLR including Goma, Kinshasa and Brazzaville. However, it ended up being confined

to Bujumbura due to mounting regional tension resulting from the crisis in eastern DRC.

Central African Republic (CAR)

On the situation in the CAR, the PSC convened two sessions during the year. In addition to assessing the political and security situation in the CAR, both of these sessions also addressed the status of operations of the AU Military Observer Mission to the Central African Republic (MOUACA) which was authorised by the PSC at its 936th session.

At the 1093rd session which was the first session of 2022 committed to the situation in CAR, the PSC noted persisting concerns, particularly regarding continued perpetration of attacks by the Coalition of Patriots for Change (CPC). With respect to CPC's on-going attacks against civilians as well as State forces and UN troops, the PSC warned that perpetrators shall be brought to justice. It is to be recalled that at its 979th session which took place in 2021, the PSC made a similar remark, issuing a warning of possible punitive measures including targeted sanctions and criminal prosecution against CPC members. With respect to MOUACA, having noted its critical role in the implementation of the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the CAR (PAPR-CAR), the PSC requested at its 1093rd session, for the AU Commission to engage with the EU regarding possible avenue for continued financial support to the mission.

The 1116th session which constituted the second PSC session of 2022 on the situation in CAR drew attention to the deteriorating security situation in the country due to violence involving armed rebels and fighting between government forces along with their foreign backers, and rebels. The worsening humanitarian situation was also one of the central issues that was discussed at the 1116th session and in that regard, the PSC emphasised the need to ensure full implementation of the Yaoundé Declaration of April 2022 which aims to resolve CAR's humanitarian crisis and particularly find solutions to address the issue of forced displacement in the country.

On MOUACA, which deployed only a fraction of the military observers mandated for deployment and less than 2 % of the funds allocated to the mission (while the small number of military observers did not have

the supplies for their dignified sustenance), the PSC, recognizing the futility of trying to sustain a poorly designed and supported mission, called for the gradual drawdown and closure of MOUACA. The mission was operationalised based on funds derived through the European Peace facility (EPF) and the funds were suspended at the end date of the EPF funding period, on 31 July 2022. Extension of financing the mission through the EPF were out ruled mainly owing to the insufficient utilisation of the funds initially availed.¹⁴ It is important to closely examine and extrapolate learning points from the circumstances surrounding the early closure of MOUACA, particularly the issues faced with proper utilisation of available funds. Clearly, this huge underutilization of funds is in total contrast to the funding shortfall facing ATMIS that was noted earlier. From exchanges Amani Africa held with those involved in implementing the mission, this was a result of various factors including the slow pace of recruitment of the military observers and the flawed design of the mission which both assigned protection of the military observers to CAR security forces (who actually lacked the capacity to bear such responsibility) and took out of the hands of AU's control procurement of the construction of mission facility.

The debacle surrounding MOUACA is yet another manifestation of the challenge of proper design and implementation of decisions. In this instance, the problematic design and follow up of the decision establishing MOUACA led to serious consequences precipitating the untimely closure of a mission, thereby adding to questions on the effectiveness of the PSC and the AU in general.

Chad

The PSC's engagement on the political transition in Chad continued during 2022, addressing the prevailing situation following the military power grab of April 2021. While the PSC dedicated one specific session to consider the Report of the Chairperson of the AU Commission on the Situation in Chad, it deliberated

¹⁴ Of the €9,551,897 availed through the EPF scheme, only €1,100,915 was utilised by MOUACA prior to the end date of the EPF funding period. Some of the challenges faced with effective utilisation of the funds and proper discharge of the mission's objectives were related to the security situation throughout CAR and the absence of sufficient and effective protection for MOUACA personnel by CAR security forces. More analysis available on this in Amani Africa's insights on PSC's [1093rd](#) and [1116th](#) sessions.

on the status of Chad's political transition at two other sessions which were committed to reviewing political transition processes in relevant AU member States.

At the 1076th session which assessed updates on developments in countries in complex transitions induced by military coup and overall insecurity, the PSC, with regards to Chad, emphasised the importance of inclusive and transparent transition process that engages all political and social stakeholders, particularly in the convening of a National Dialogue and in the holding of a referendum process for a new constitution as well as free, transparent and credible elections.

The 1106th session on countries in complex political transitions was the second time in 2022 where the PSC deliberated on the situation in Chad. This session was held against the backdrop of two developments in the transition: the signing of the Doha Agreement – a peace agreement signed in August 2022 between the Chadian transitional government and over 30 opposition groups – and the commencement of the National Inclusive Dialogue. Of course, despite the importance of both steps for ensuring smooth transition in Chad, most of the influential opposition armed groups refrained from being both signatories to the Doha Agreement and participants in the National Inclusive Dialogue. The key outcome of the session was PSC's decision 'unequivocally (reiterating) that all members of the Transitional Military Council (TMC) shall be ineligible to participate as candidates for the elections at the end of the transition'. The emphatic reiteration of this decision is indicative of the fact that the PSC considered the military seizure of power in April 2021 as constituting unconstitutional change of government contrary to AU norms.

PSC's consideration of the AU Commission Chairperson's report on the situation in Chad took place at its 1121st session. The session came about following the conclusion of the National Inclusive Dialogue which not only adopted decisions flouting PSC's decision on timelines and eligibility for elections but also triggered mass protest punctuated by deadly response by security forces. It ended up with extension of the transition period for additional 24 months and making members of the Transitional Military Council (TMC) headed by Mahamat Idriss Deby Itno, to be eligible to run for presidency when elections are held at the conclusion of the transition period.

With its members divided on whether the outcome of the national dialogue flouting PSC's decisions would trigger the application of suspension on Chad, the most the PSC did was to reaffirm its rejection of unconstitutional changes of government and its earlier decisions on Chad including its decision in the 1106th session. Rather than taking the issue of suspension off the table, this has simply kicked the can down the road. The outcome of its 1121st session, adopted as a Press Statement rather than a Communiqué, the PSC also requested the AU Commission to deploy the AU Panel of the Wise to Chad, to 'gather first-hand information, in consultation with all relevant stakeholders on the ground' and to brief the PSC before 31 March 2023. It is therefore expected that one of the major issues that will be on the PSC's agenda in 2023 will be Chad's complex political transition.

The complete lack of regard by the military junta and those in the national dialogue of the decision of the PSC on the timeframe and importantly on the eligibility of the members of the TMC in elections that will be held at the end of the transition betrays a perception that the TMC and those around it can get away with flouting the authority of the PSC. Unless the PSC guards against such tendencies, there is a risk of further erosion of its standing and effectiveness. The test for the PSC in this regard is whether it would uphold its decision on non-eligibility of members of the TMC by suspending the country should any of them stand for election at the end of the transition period.

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

Apart from the reference made to it in the session on the GLR, the PSC held a session dedicated to the situation in Eastern DRC only at its 1103rd session. This was despite the upsurge of fighting that has intensified the existing insecurity in eastern DRC and escalation of tensions between DRC and Rwanda following the resurgence of the March 23 Movement (M23) in March 2022. Looking back to the past couple years, the PSC's engagement on the DRC has already been waning with no sessions dedicated specifically to DRC in 2020 and 2021. PSC's engagement over the years suggests that this is one of those situations the PSC has tended to show deference to the lead role of regional and global actors rather than being on the

driver seat.¹⁵

The 1103rd session of the PSC which assessed the situation in eastern DRC welcomed the Nairobi and Luanda processes,¹⁶ endorsed the East African Community (EAC)'s deployment of Regional Force to eastern DRC, called for de-escalation of tensions and strongly condemned activities of armed groups in eastern DRC including M23, the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) and Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda (FDLR).

The session also led to the articulation of some concrete requests for the AU Commission to undertake. The requests include: the facilitation of consultation among EAC, Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and South African Development Community (SADC), to 'agree on a joint framework and modalities for effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the harmonized and coordinated efforts' as well as the establishment of a Strategic Support Cell within the PAPS department to support the EAC Regional Force and its military operations in eastern DRC. While these and other key decisions of the 1103rd session indicate PSC's ambition to take a more active role, there has been no follow-up session in 2022 to assess the status of their implementation. This is a manifestation of the adoption of potentially useful decisions without providing for the mechanism and time frame for effective follow up.

¹⁵ Interestingly, the PSC was as reluctant and slow in its engagement on the first war involving the M23 in 2012/2013 as well. See Solomon Ayele Dersso, 'Annual Review of the AU PSC' (2014), available on: <https://bit.ly/3RfPa8a>

¹⁶ The Nairobi and Luanda Processes are two ongoing efforts spearheaded respectively, by the East African Community (EAC) and President Joao Manuel Goncalves Lourenco of Angola, appointed by the AU in his capacity as Chairperson of the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR). The Nairobi Process approaches resolution of the crisis in eastern DRC through the employment of two parallel tracks – a military track under which a Regional Force of the EAC has been deployed to neutralise negative forces in the region and a political track which seeks to facilitate multiple consultations between concerned parties including DRC, local armed groups and relevant neighbouring states such as Rwanda, to resolve the underlying root causes of ongoing conflicts in eastern DRC. The Luanda Process is a mediation effort which was triggered in response to the political tension and deterioration of diplomatic relations between DRC and Rwanda following the resurgence of M23. On its part, the Luanda process has also been making some headways including the convening of a mini-Summit in November 2022, the outcomes of which influenced M23's declaration of readiness for disengagement.

Great Lakes Region (GLR)

One session was convened during the year to assess the regional situation in the GLR. This was the 1078th session which was dedicated specifically to a follow-up on the 10th High-Level Meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism (ROM) of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework (PSCF) for DRC, held on 24 February 2022, after a three-years interval. Further to reiterating the importance of the PSCF agreement for regional stabilisation in the GLR and endorsing the conclusions of 10th High-Level Meeting of the ROM of PSCF, the PSC used the session to emphasise the need of exploring economic opportunities, particularly trade and cross-border cooperation, to strengthen regional integration.

A noteworthy content of the Communiqué of the 1078th session was also PSC's designation of the overall situation in eastern DRC as terrorism. Unlike the UN Security Council, the PSC does not have an established framework for designation of a situation as terrorism. Indications are that this was included on DRC's expectation and meant to provide Kinshasa's government the basis to avoid negotiation with armed rebel groups on its territory. Yet, it was not actually used for such purposes and under the Nairobi process the political track affirms negotiation with armed groups.

VI PSC ON THE SITUATIONS IN WEST AFRICA

PSC dedicated a total of 14 sessions to the situation in the West African region in the year under review, showing increase from 2021 (ten sessions). Like previous years, the situation in Mali continued to dominate the agenda of the PSC from the region. The situations in Burkina Faso and Guinea also received attention where PSC dedicated four sessions for each case. The deteriorating security situation in the Sahel region characterized by rising threat of terrorism and its geographic spread, and the difficult post-coup transitions in Mali, Burkina Faso and Guinea were the two main areas of PSC's engagement in the region. Other matters of concern for the region for which the PSC dedicated other sessions include those on the situation in the Lake Chad basin and on maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea.

In some instances, PSC dedicated stand-alone

sessions to consider the political transitions in Mali, Burkina Faso, and Guinea but in most cases, they were considered together as one agenda item. This was the case during PSC's 1076th, 1106th, and 1116th sessions where the three countries along with others were discussed as one agenda item. While the assumption behind merging these three different situations could be the similar nature of the transition (all affected by unconstitutional changes of government), this may also deny the PSC the opportunity to engage in more in-depth discussions on each situation the specificity and complexity of which merits separate dedicated sessions. In these sessions, particularly PSC's 1106th session, explored different ways and means of supporting all countries in political transition, including through developing a monitoring and evaluation mechanism; initiating a Commission-wide humanitarian support package; spearheading mobilization of necessary resources; developing support program in the areas of National Reconciliation, Governance, Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR)/Security Sector Reform (SSR), Institutional Reforms; and the Africa Facility to Support Inclusive Transition (AFSIT) which is to be co-created by the Commission and UNDP. Again how, when and through what mechanism these would be followed up is not provided for.

Guinea Bissau was back on the agenda of the PSC after almost three years. If PSC were to follow the approach it adopted on Burundi in 2021, it should have removed Guinea Bissau from its agenda pursuant to PSC's Rule 7(c) of its Rules of Procedure, which requires a deletion of an item the consideration of which has not been resumed for two years. It is to be recalled that PSC applied its rule on delisting items for the first time in 2021 when it decided, at its 993rd session, to remove Burundi from its agenda, although this was also more on account of the significant progress in the country's political and security situations than just lack of engagement by the PSC within the framework of Rule 7(c).

In 2022, PSC also renewed the mandate of MNJTF two times, at its 1057th session in January, and 1126th session in December. The latest mandate renewal takes effect from 1 February 2023 for one additional year. Strikingly, the mandate of G-5 Sahel Joint Force has never been renewed despite its expiry on 13 July 2022.¹⁷ On the other hand, PSC planned to convene

¹⁷ This may relate to the uncertainty that the Joint Force

a session to receive update on the implementation of the decision for the deployment of the 3000 troops to the Sahel region in December. However, that session was not convened. The last time that PSC considered the deployment of the troops was during its 950th session in September 2020.

One trend that has emerged from PSC's engagement in the situations in West Africa and the Sahel in 2022 notably vis-à-vis the role of ECOWAS is the PSC's disposition to follow the leadership of ECOWAS.

Mali and the Sahel

PSC discussed the security and political situations in Mali and the Sahel at least on six occasions focusing on both the political transition process and the security situation. The first session of the year on Mali and the Sahel was at its 1057th session of 14 January. The main outcome of that session was PSC's endorsement of the Communiqué of 4th Extraordinary summit of ECOWAS that imposed tough economic and financial sanctions against Mali following disagreement between the regional bloc and Malian authorities over the duration of the transitional period. It is not uncommon for PSC to endorse outcomes of the meetings of regional mechanisms including ECOWAS but the economic and financial sanctions on Mali did not receive unanimous support as several members cautioned against wholesale endorsement partly on account of the sanctions not being targeted and the foreseeable adverse impact of these sanctions on the wider Malian public.¹⁸

PSC, at its 1057th session, rejected the extension of the transition timeline by the military junta in Mali in the strongest terms considering it as 'unconstitutional, impermissible, inappropriate and a grave obstruction to democratic processes in the country'. Yet, it also appealed to the Malian transitional authorities and the regional bloc to agree on an acceptable transition timeline not exceeding 16 months, but the two sides

currently facing after Mali's withdrawal in May, although the withdrawal of one troop contributing country from a joint force does not on its own fundamentally change the legal status of the mission and hence does not dispense with the need for renewal of its mandate.

¹⁸ There are indeed PSC members who express concern about the trend in the PSC of rubber stamping the work of sub-regional bodies and the attendant risk of the PSC surrendering its primary responsibility and failing to exercise its authority as prescribed in the PSC Protocol.

eventually settled for a two-year transition with effect from March 2022.

PSC's 1087th session of 1 June on the other hand focused on the security situation of the broader Sahel region. The session noted the surge in fatalities from terrorist attacks, the expansion of terrorism from the region to the Gulf of Guinea littoral states, and the 'mutual reinforcing link' between terrorism and unconstitutional changes of government as a matter of 'deep concern'. In that session, PSC also requested the AU Commission to expedite the revision of the AU Strategy for the Sahel region upon the finalization of the AU-UN-ECOWAS-G5 Sahel Strategic Assessment on Governance and Security in Sahel, which is expected to be presented to the 36th Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly in February 2023. The finalization of these two important documents would play significant role in providing a strategic guidance for relevant actors in their effort to structurally address the multiple security threats affecting the region.

The 1106th session took note of some of the positive progress that Malian authorities made in the conduct of the transition, including notably the adoption of a shorter transition period, enactment of new electoral law and creation of an independent election body, which indeed led ECOWAS to remove the economic and financial sanctions it imposed in January. Another positive development the session noted is in relation to the implementation of the 2015 Agreement for the Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, particularly the deal over distribution quota for the integration of the 26,000 ex-combatants.¹⁹

Burkina Faso

Apart from the terrorism menace that expanded its grip on wider swaths of the country (which attracted increased attention from the PSC in recent years as part of its engagement on the Sahel), Burkina Faso experienced two military coups in 2022 that necessitated addressing it as a stand alone agenda. PSC addressed the situation in Burkina Faso on four occasions but only the 1062nd session was fully dedicated to Burkina. In the other three sessions

(1076th, 1106th, and 1116th sessions), the PSC addressed the situation in Burkina Faso as part of the generic agenda on countries in (complex) political transitions.

PSC convened its 1062nd session on 31 January in response to the 24 January military coup. Unlike the prevalent practice of convening an emergency session within few days after the occurrence of military coups, PSC put on hold its meeting on Burkina Faso until ECOWAS pronounced itself on the unfolding situation in that country. Predictably, the PSC followed ECOWAS in suspending Burkina Faso from the AU until the effective restoration of normal constitutional order in the country. One of the immediate consequences of this decision was the removal of Burkina Faso from the list of candidature for the 2022 election of the PSC members held on 3 February.²⁰ PSC also took the opportunity to reiterate its call on the AU Commission to undertake a review of the African Governance Architecture with the view to addressing the surge in unconstitutional changes of government in the continent and submit the same for consideration within two months, due end of March but this is as yet to be delivered.

At the 1076th session held on 14 April, PSC noted some of the positive steps taken by the military authorities including the adoption of Transitional Charter, appointment of a civilian Prime Minister and the formation of an interim government as well as Transitional Legislative Assembly. During its 1106th session of 19 September, PSC also noted additional positive steps taken by the military authorities, particularly the adoption of a shorter transition timeframe set for 24 months with effect from 1 July 2022. Although another coup was staged on 30 September, PSC did not take further sanctions as the country has been already on suspension following the January coup. However, at its 1116th session held on 31 October, PSC not only condemned the military coup but also reminded Burkinabe authorities to 'uphold and honor' the already agreed transition timetable of 24 months with electoral deadlines for the restoration of constitutional order by July 2024.

As emphasized in our work for the AU to put in place a mechanism for accompanying countries suspended

¹⁹ Another issue PSC raised in this session was the tension between Mali and Cote d'Ivoire over the arrest of 46 of the latter's soldiers in Mali on which the PSC expressed concern. Apart from reiterating this concern, the PSC at its 1116th session appealed to the two countries to resolve the issue over the soldiers amicably.

²⁰ See Amani Africa, [2022 Elections of the PSC: Overview of the Process and List of Candidates](#).

due to coups in the process of effecting the requisite reforms, the PSC decided, as an important course of action, to establish what is referred to as 'Transitional Support Group in Burkina Faso (TSG-BF)' with the view to spearheading mobilization of reforms required to address the security, development, and humanitarian challenges that the country is facing.

Guinea

Like Burkina Faso, PSC discussed the situation in Guinea in four instances to assess progress towards the restoration of constitutional order in that country. On 10 February, PSC dedicated a stand-alone session (1064th) on Guinea where it noted some progress including the adoption of the Transitional Charter, adoption of government's roadmap for the transition and appointment of members of the National Transitional Council. The issue of duration of the transition was a matter of concern for the PSC at the session. In that regard, it requested the transitional authorities to expedite the establishment of a 'clear, practical and time-bound calendar on the implementation of the Transition Charter', but without prescribing specific timeline for the transition as it did in previous times. To that end, PSC requested the AU Commission, in collaboration with ECOWAS, to provide the necessary technical support to Guinea under the auspices of a Monitoring Mechanism on Transition in Guinea (MMTG). The establishment of the Monitoring Mechanism was agreed at PSC's 1030th session on 10 September 2021 as a comprehensive framework for coordinated support and follow-up of the transition in Guinea.

It was only in May 2022 that the authorities proposed a 36-month transition to a civilian rule, which ECOWAS rejected. After diplomatic engagements, in October, the regional bloc and Guinean authorities agreed for a two-year transition. During its 1116th session on 31 October, a session that considered the situation in the Sahel and Guinea, PSC welcomed the consensus reached on the transition timeline.

As with Burkina Faso, the PSC rightly decided to establish a tool for accompanying Guinea for inducing and supporting the initiation and implementation of relevant governance, constitutional and security reforms able to address the issues that precipitated the military coup. In a trend that became characteristic

of PSC decisions, no **substantial** progress has been registered during 2022 in operationalizing the transition support and monitoring mechanism the PSC established at its 1030th session.

Lake Chad Basin

PSC convened three sessions to discuss the situation in the Lake Chad Basin of which two of them were dedicated for the renewal of mandate of Multinational Joint Taskforce (MNJTF). On 14 January, at its 1057th session, PSC renewed the mandate of the Joint Force for additional one year, effective from 1 February 2022. In light of the expiry of the mandate at early February 2023, PSC considered MNJTF at its 1126th session on 12 December, which renewed the mandate for another one year until 1 February 2024. In addition to renewing the mandate of the Force, PSC took the opportunity to assess progress made and remaining challenges in the implementation of MNJTF's mandate. One of the major outcomes of the session in that regard is PSC's call for the 'restructuring of the MNJTF into a multidisciplinary force with robust police and civilian components', with the view to addressing the scourge of terrorism in a comprehensive manner.

During its 1086th session of 31 May, PSC also took stock of the implementation of the Regional Stabilization Strategy (RSS) as well as the counterterrorism operation in the region. In that session, PSC requested the AU Commission to undertake specific tasks, including spearheading the mobilization of the required resources for the development of the region, expedite the finalization of a continental policy on stabilization based on experiences from Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC), and initiate a draft continental strategy for the fight against illicit small arms and light weapons. PSC also agreed to carry out a field mission to the Lake Chad Basin region without proposing a specific timeline.

Maritime Security in the Gulf of Guinea

PSC met twice in 2022 to discuss maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea (GoG). The first session was during its 1090th session that took place on 28 June while the second meeting was held on 19 December that constituted PSC's 1128th session. In both sessions, PSC expressed its concern over the threat of piracy and armed robbery at sea as well as other organized crimes such as illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing. Although many sources indicate the downward trend of piracy and armed robbery at sea in the region throughout 2021 and 2022, PSC in the 1128th session rather noted piracy and other organized criminal networks posing 'growing insecurity' to the region.

In terms of addressing the maritime security threat in the GoG, both the communiqués adopted at the 1090th and 1128th session highlighted the importance of creating the necessary legal framework that would criminalize maritime offences as well as investigate, prosecute, and extradite perpetrators. Full implementation of the regional arrangements and frameworks that intend to address maritime insecurity in the region, particularly the Yaoundé Code of Conduct and the Interregional Coordination Centre established by ECCAS and ECOWAS, were stressed as well.

During its 1090th session, PSC made two specific requests on the AU Commission with the aim to enhance continental response mechanism towards addressing maritime insecurity in the GoG. The first is for the Commission to undertake assessment of the implementation of all instruments and frameworks on maritime security while the second is to set up 'a body of experts or a Task Force' to provide technical expertise to Member States and other stakeholders on maritime security in the continent. The 1128th session on its part took note of one major regional development in relation to strengthening regional mechanism to advance maritime security in the region- efforts to set-up a Combined Maritime Task Force (CMTF) for the GoG. Clearly, the specific asks directed at the AU Commission in the communiqué of the 1090th session can be useful in strengthening AU's capacity in tracking and mobilizing response to maritime security threats.

Guinea Bissau

PSC considered the situation in Guinea Bissau during its 1126th session on 12 December. This has been the first time that PSC discussed the situation in that country since January 2020. The session was held amid a political tension between the President and the Assembly which led to the dissolution of the legislative body. Snap election was expected to happen on 18 December. In the 1126th session, PSC expressed its concern over the persisting political and security challenges, including the failure to organize the envisaged legislative elections, growing threat of organized crime, money laundering, human and drug trafficking, targeted political assassinations and other forms of human right violations and crimes, as well as the attempted coup of 1 February. Against this context, key outcome of the session was PSC's decision to 'urgently dispatch a high-level fact-finding mission to Guinea Bissau' with the mandate to engage with all key stakeholders with regards to the persisting challenges and identify the required support.

Another important context against which this session was held is the deployment of the ECOWAS Stabilization Mission in Guinea Bissau (ECOMIB), which was mandated by the regional bloc during its 3 February 2022 extraordinary summit. The deployment came following the 1 February attempted coup in that country. At its 1126th session, PSC commended ECOWAS for the deployment while appealing for sustained and predictable support to enable the mission to discharge its mandate effectively. This follows the trend in requests for PSC support by regional missions almost all the time for mobilizing resources. Earlier in the year, the PSC engaged the deployment of SAMIM for the first time when it was approached to throw its continental weight behind the regional mission including particularly by mobilizing financial and logistical support.

VII PSC ON THE SITUATIONS IN THE NORTH AFRICA REGION

As usual, the north African region remained one of the two sub-regions (along with southern Africa) that had the lowest number of PSC sessions dedicated to it during 2022. The crisis in Libya was the only situation that featured on the PSC agenda from north Africa region and it featured only once on the PSC agenda during the year.²¹ Although there was an initial plan in February to have a summit level session dedicated to Western Sahara, the situation was removed following the revision of the programme of work for the month.

There were also no field missions conducted to this region although the 9th High-Level Seminar on Peace and Security in Africa was held in Oran, Algeria for a second time in row, following the previous seminar which also took place in Oran. This year's round of seminar was convened from 7 to 9 December within the overall framework of enhancing cooperation between the PSC and the African three members of the United Nations (UN) Security Council (UNSC) (A3 States). Another activity which took the PSC to the north Africa region during the year was a Policy Conference on the nexus between Peace, Security and Development, organised through the collaboration of the PAPS Department, partners and the Kingdom of Morocco in Tangier, Morocco, from 25 to 27 October.

Libya

The situation in Libya was considered at PSC's 1091st session. The session's central focus was the political crisis which unfolded in Libya following the postponement of general elections initially planned to take place in December 2021.²²

²¹ This is the third year in a row that the PSC dealt with Libya only once in a year.

²² The postponement of the triggered the contestation of the legitimacy of the interim government based in Tripoli (the Government of National Unity (GNU)) which is led by interim Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibeh. On 10 February 2022, these contestations culminated in the appointment of former Interior Minister, Fathi Bashagha, as Prime Minister by the east-based House of Representatives (HoR). Since then, Libya has been taken back to having parallel governments, the on-going political impasse between Tripoli and east based HoR, which erupted into active hostilities in August 2022 threatening to push the country to the full-blown conflict of pre-October 2020.

In addition to noting the concerning consequences of the postponement of the elections including violations of the October 2020 Ceasefire Agreement, the PSC urged at the 1091st session, all Libyan stakeholders to work towards consensus over finalising the necessary constitutional and electoral frameworks in order to pave the way for the conduct of the much-awaited general elections. It also emphasised the important role of the AU, particularly in supporting national reconciliation efforts in Libya and called for enhanced coordination, complementarity and harmonisation of efforts deployed by the AU, the UN, the EU, the League of Arab States (LAS) and other relevant actors in the international community. The PSC further recalled in line with Decision [[Assembly/AU/Dec.819\(XXXV\)](#)] of the 35th Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly, the 'urgent need for the AU Commission to ensure that the AU Mission in Libya is relocated to Tripoli and is sufficiently capacitated, in order to enable it to more effectively discharge its mandate and adequately support the AU's efforts on Libya'.

The political impasse between Libyan actors continues, not only blocking the chances of agreement on the relevant constitutional and legal basis for the conduct of elections, but also resulting in multiple instances of violations of the 2020 Ceasefire Agreement. Despite the strong points emphasised in the Communiqué of its 1091st session regarding the importance of AU's sustained engagement on the situation in Libya, the PSC is yet to follow up on measures taken to implement the 1091st Communiqué. Indeed, despite the deterioration of the situation with the descent of the rivalry between the Tripoli and East based rival governments into active hostilities, the PSC did not convene a session after the 1091st session.

VIII PSC ON THE SITUATIONS IN THE SOUTHERN AFRICA REGION

From southern Africa, Mozambique, particularly the security crisis in Cabo Delgado province of its northern region, was the situation that featured in PSC's agenda during 2022. Two sessions were dedicated to this agenda item.

While no field missions of the PSC were conducted to southern Africa, some of PSC's activities took place

in this region including: Induction of new members of the PSC which took place in Maseru, Lesotho from 23 to 25 March; 2nd Annual Joint Retreat between PSC and African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) held in Durban, South Africa from 14 to 15 November and the 14th Annual PSC Retreat on its Working Methods convened in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe from 17 to 19 November.

Mozambique

In 2022, the PSC first addressed the situation in Mozambique as one of the agenda items of its 1062nd session. Further to noting the continued intensification of terrorism in Cabo Delgado, the session mainly served to endorse the deployment of the SADC Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM). In Addition to its endorsement, the PSC also adopted key decisions to enable enhanced operation and functioning of SAMIM including the provision of equipment to the mission, from the Continental Logistics Base (CLB) in Douala, Cameroon as well as delivery of additional equipment from a second batch of military aid donated by China to the AU. In the spirit of strengthening and intensifying its engagement on the situation, the PSC also requested the AU Commission to work with the SADC Secretariat in providing it regular updates on the status of implementation of SAMIM's mandates.

PSC's 1119th meeting was the second session on the situation in Mozambique convened during the year. The 1119th session welcomed AU's contributions to SAMIM, particularly the provision of necessary equipment from the CLB in line with the decision of PSC's 1062nd session. The extension of SAMIM's mandate for a one-year period, in line with the 42nd Ordinary Summit of the SADC Heads of State and Government held in August 2022, was also endorsed by the PSC. The expansion of terrorist acts from Cabo Delgado to other neighbouring northern provinces as well as the continuous attacks in Cabo Delgado and the consequent humanitarian toll were also among the critical issues addressed at the 1119th session.

Noting the challenges SAMIM faces in terms of finance and logistics, the PSC also directed the AU Commission to continue engaging the EU regarding options for financing the mission. A positive development in this respect has been the EU Council's allocation of €20 million in support of the continued deployment

of Rwanda Defence Force (RDF) in Cabo Delgado province, within the framework of the EPF. It is to be recalled that the RDF deployment in Cabo Delgado commenced in July 2021 based on bilateral agreement between the governments of Mozambique and Rwanda. The PSC has also welcomed and appreciated the deployment of RDF in Cabo Delgado at both the 1062nd and 1119th sessions.

IX THEMATIC WORK OF THE PSC

In 2022, majority of the sessions were committed to thematic issues. Much like 2021, this demonstrated the growing attention of the PSC to peace and security concerns of various themes.

Sessions on specific category of protected groups

In 2022, PSC's sessions addressing concerns relating to specific groups/categories of people covered children affected by armed conflicts (CAAC); women, peace and security (WPS); and youth, peace and security (YPS), all of which are standing agenda items of the PSC. In total, three sessions were committed to CAAC while two were committed to WPS and three to YPS. Considering that the PSC convened no session on YPS and only one session on CAAC the previous year, both themes have received increased attention in 2022. On the other hand, a session on the plight of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), a theme which forms a regular part of PSC's agenda, has been missing from this year's thematic issues relating to specific groups.

The first PSC meeting of the year on CAAC was the 1070th session. The session welcomed the development of two draft AU policies on child protection²³ – policy on child protection in AU PSOs

²³ While the PSC has emphasised the importance of integrating child protection within AU peace and security agenda at a number of its previous sessions, it made the specific to 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', at its 994th session. For more analysis on the process involved in the making of the two policies on child protection, see Amani Africa, Monthly Digest on the PSC ([March 2022](#)).

and policy on mainstreaming child protection in APSA – and requested their submission to the Specialized Technical Committee for Defence, Safety and Security (STCDSS). Both policies were considered and adopted by the STCDSS at its 14th Ordinary Meeting held on 12 May 2022. The second session dedicated to CAAC was the 1101st session. In addition to inviting and hearing the experiences of children living in different conflict affected parts of the continent, the PSC decided at that session that CAAC representatives should be regularly invited to all future PSC sessions committed to AU child protection agenda. The 1110th session, the third and last session dedicated to CAAC during the year, had a specific focus on the prevention of recruitment and use of children in armed conflicts. Further to condemning the growing trend of recruiting and using children in conflict settings, the PSC used the session to reiterate its previous requests for the Chairperson of the AU Commission to appoint a Special Envoy for CAAC. The AU Commission was also requested to conduct a study on the specific impact of terrorism on children and submit to the PSC.

Regarding WPS, the two PSC sessions convened during the year were the 1063rd and 1109th sessions. The 1063rd meeting was an open session held at ministerial level with a specific focus on examining the nexus between urbanisation and the WPS agenda. Reflecting on the multiple ways through which urbanisation plans and strategies fail to take account of vulnerabilities of women and girls, the session served to highlight steps critical for ensuing gender-sensitivity in urban planning and development. A key conclusion of the session which warrants close follow up at future PSC deliberations on WPS was the request made to the AU Commission, through the Office of the AU Special Envoy on WPS, to ‘develop a Continental Comprehensive Roadmap on Urbanisation that is both security and gender-sensitive’ and submit to the PSC. The 1109th session was committed to the PSC’s annual commemoration of UNSC Resolution 1325 on WPS ([S/RES/1325](#)). Progress in the implementation of S/RES/1325, particularly through the adoption of relevant policies in AU PSOs addressing issues of sexual and gender- based violence, was welcomed. To further enhance realisation of the objective of S/RES/1325, the PSC called on member States and partners to strengthen technical and financial support to accelerate the implementation of National Action Plans (NAPs) on WPS.

The three meetings of the PSC dedicated to YPS were the 1067th, 1080th and 1118th sessions. The appointment of the new AU Special Envoy on YPS, Ms. Chido Cleo Mpemba as well as the assumption of office of the second cohort of African Youth Ambassadors for Peace (AYAPs) was welcomed at the 1067th session which also welcomed the development of NAP by Nigeria for the implementation of the Continental Framework on YPS. The 1080th session was specifically committed to reflecting on the conclusions of the Continental Dialogue on WPS held from 23 to 24 April 2022 in Bujumbura, Burundi. The PSC decided at that session to institutionalise the holding of an Annual Continental Dialogue on YPS in Bujumbura. At the 1118th open session, the PSC noted and commended efforts aimed at ensuring active role of African youth in advocating for Africa’s climate change priorities, in the lead up to and during COP27.

African Peace and Security Architecture and renewal of mandate of PSOs

In addition to sessions specific to particular PSOs addressed in respective country situations, the PSC also convened six sessions committed to various tools and pillars of APSA during the year.

The first APSA related PSC session of 2022 took place as an agenda item of the 1069th session and assessed the status of operationalisation of the African Standby Force (ASF). The session served to discuss in some details the key aspects of finalising the operationalisation of ASF. Some of the critical points addressed in this regard were the status of the draft MoU between AU and RECs/RMs on the Deployment and Employment of ASF; the level of force/capability generation; the finalisation of the 2021-2025 strategic work plan for the enhancement of ASF; and the operation of the continental logistics base (CLB) and the Regional Logistics Depots (RLD).²⁴

Another session to consider developments regarding operationalisation of ASF was planned to take place during December. However, the session did not take place as initially envisaged in the program of work for the month.

²⁴ For more details on the deliberations and outcomes of the 1069th PSC session on Operationalisation of ASF, see Amani Africa’s Monthly Digest on the PSC ([March 2022](#)).

The other APSA related session of 2022 was the 1073rd meeting which focused on AU's Continental Early Warning and Security (CEWS) agenda. The session played a critical role in underscoring some of the issues which continue to challenge and impede effective early action in the continent. It particularly drew much-needed attention to 'the persistent denials of credible early warning reports of looming crisis and conflict situations on the Continent and the invoking of sovereignty by Member States' as factors preventing timely and effective response.²⁵

The 1102nd lessons learning session on the implementation of AU Transitional Justice Policy (AUTJP) was the third APSA related session of the year. Although the PSC has dedicated several sessions to 'peace, justice and reconciliation' which were relevant for the articulation of AU's conception of transitional justice, the 1102nd session was the first time where the AUTJP was considered by the PSC since its adoption in 2019. The session served to draw lessons from the transitional justice experiences of relevant member States including The Gambia, South Sudan, Rwanda and Sierra Leone. The PSC also emphasised at the session the importance of the AUTJP and called on member States to use the policy as a guidance in the development of their respective context-specific transitional justice policies.

The forth ASPA related session of 2022 was the consideration of updates on AU Peace Fund which took place on 14 September. The session served for the PSC, jointly with the Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC) Sub-Committee on Budget Matters and the Board of Trustees of the AU Peace Fund, to reflect on key aspects related to operationalisation of the Peace Fund including identification of priority areas for use of funds from interest accrued to the current contributions to Peace Fund as well as discussion around pilot utilisation of the Peace Fund through costed and prioritised programmatic activities to address urgent peace and security challenges on the Continent.

The 1122nd briefing on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) in Africa was the next APSA

related session of the year. Among other important issues, this year's PSC deliberation on AU PCRD efforts had a focus on the increasing financing gaps noted in the area of peacebuilding. In this respect, the PSC made important calls including for enhanced engagement and partnership with the private sector. The urgent need to reactivate the PSC Sub-Committee on PCRD was also emphasised at the session and in this regard, the PSC Committee of Experts (CoE) was tasked to urgently work on the terms of reference and time frames of the Sub-Committee.

The last APSA related session convened during 2022 was the consideration of the Conclusions of the Inaugural Lessons Learning Forum on AU PSOs and ASF which formed part of the agenda items of the 1129th PSC session. In addition to adopting the [Conclusions](#) of the lessons learning forum, the PSC directed the AU Commission to 'utilize the ASF framework in the mandating, implementation, management, and oversight of all AU PSOs' going forward.

Further to APSA related sessions convened during the year, the below table captures mandate renewals and extensions of PSOs adopted by the PSC during 2022. The mandate of the G5 Sahel joint force which expired on 13 July 2022, has not been renewed within this calendrical year.

MANDATE RENEWALS	
ATMIS	Authorised to replace AMISOM, effective from 1 April 2022 and with gradual handover of security responsibilities to SSF by December 2024 in line with STP [at PSC's 1068th session held on 8 March 2022]
MNJTf	Mandate renewed for a one-year period until 1 February 2023 [at PSC's 1057th session held on 14 January 2022]

Mandate Renewals 2022

²⁵ For more details on the deliberations and outcomes of the 1069th PSC session on Operationalisation of ASF, see Amani Africa's Monthly Digest on the PSC ([April 2022](#)).

Election and governance

Although it is not matched by effective action, this year's sessions committed to election and governance themes were more than double the number from the previous year. Whereas the PSC dedicated three sessions to issues relating to this theme last year, seven sessions were convened in 2022. In addition, some of PSC's engagements with other AU organs – discussed in subsequent sub-section dedicated to 'Consultative Meetings/Engagements' – also had a focus on the governance-peace and security nexus.

The 1061st, 1062nd, 1069th, 1077th, 1096th, 1100th, and 1129th sessions addressed governance related peace and security concerns. The 1061st session was convened under the theme of 'promoting constitutionalism, democracy and inclusive governance to strengthen peace, security and stability in Africa'. This session was convened in response to the resurgence in UCG in the continent, witnessed throughout 2021 and in early 2022, and its attendant negative implications to peace and security. Further to drawing attention to the importance of closely engaging AU tools and frameworks on governance including the AGA and the APRM to promote and advance good governance, the PSC also decided at that session, to reactivate the PSC Sub-Committee on Sanctions. It was also at this session that the PSC decided to convene a brainstorming forum with relevant stakeholders on the issue of UCG. Accordingly, a brainstorming session on UCG was convened in Accra, Ghana from 15 to 17 March which resulted in the adoption of the 'Accra

Declaration on UCG in Africa'.²⁶ At the 1077th session, the PSC endorsed the Accra Declaration on UCG for submission to the 16th Extraordinary Session of the AU Heads of State and Government.

The 1062nd and the 1096th sessions were committed to the consideration of elections conducted in Africa, based on the bi-annual reports of the AU Commission Chairperson. At the 1062nd session, the PSC was briefed on elections that took place in the period from July

to December 2021.²⁷ At the 1096th session, the PSC considered the report for elections in the continent which took place in the period between January to June 2022,²⁸ as well as the outlook for elections expected to be organised during the time between July to December 2022.²⁹

As an agenda item of the 1069th session, the PSC considered the conclusions of its inaugural joint retreat with the APRM, which took place from 19 to 21 December 2021 (the eThekweni Conclusions). The conclusions of the 2nd joint retreat between the two which took place from on 14 to 15 November 2022 was considered and adopted as an agenda item of PSC's 1129th session. At the 1069th session, the PSC, in addition to adopting the eThekweni Conclusions, decided to institutionalise the annual holding of joint retreat of the PSC and APRM. Based on the outcomes of the retreats, both the 1069th and 1129th sessions served the PSC to underscore the importance of addressing governance related root causes of conflicts and the instrumentality of early warning and preventive tools to respond to these issues in a timely manner.

The 1100th session addressed the issue of enforcing sanctions imposed against UCG in Africa. Much like the other sessions discussed in this sub-section, this meeting was also convened in the context of growing concern over the spike of UCG experienced in the continent. The central purpose of the session was to reflect on how sanctions imposed against UCG can be more effective and carry deterrence effect. The importance of making sanctions against UCG 'smartly targeted to the concerned parties' while avoiding 'hardships on the citizenry of concerned countries' was

²⁷ Countries whose elections were reviewed in this period were: Cape Verde, CAR, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Morocco, Sao Tome and Principe, Somalia and Zambia.

²⁸ The finalisation of Somalia's repeatedly postponed elections and the peaceful handover of power from outgoing President Mohamed Abdullahi Farmajo to the elected incoming President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud was one of the important milestones achieved during this election period. In addition to Somalia, the PSC welcomed the successful conduct of elections of members of National Assembly in The Gambia and took note of the successful organisation of parliamentary elections in Senegal and constitutional referendum in Tunisia.

²⁹ At the 1096th session, the PSC received statements from member States organising their elections during the second half of 2022 including Angola, Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Lesotho, Kenya, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal and Tunisia.

²⁶ Further to shading light on the challenges being posed to democracy and constitutionalism in the continent, the Accra Declaration has also served as the foundation document for the AU Assembly extraordinary summit held in Malabo for addressing, among others, the issue of UCG.

emphasised by the PSC. Most notable outcomes of the session include the decision on the establishment of a monitoring and evaluation group, to assess the implementation of the sanctions imposed against the Member States and tasking the AU Commission 'to develop an effective mechanism for the strengthening of the AU sanctions regime and providing appropriate technical capacities to the PSC Committee of Experts and the Military Staff Committee'.

In addition to the foregoing, the PSC was able to engage on various thematic issues forming part of its standing agenda items ranging from terrorism and violent extremism to humanitarian disasters to climate change. Notably, there were no sessions committed to health pandemics this year, a theme which dominated the PSC's agenda in 2020 and featured to some extent in its 2021 agenda due to the outbreak and spread of Covid-19.

Terrorism: PSC making a shift away from a military heavy policy response

As in 2021, terrorism and violent extremism continued to receive increased attention by the PSC in 2022 as can be drawn both from the number as well as level of sessions dedicated to the theme. Three sessions (1082nd, 1107th, and 1111st) were committed to this theme and two of these (the 1107th and 1111st) were convened at ministerial level. The 1082nd session had a specific focus on emphasising the growing link between transnational organised crime and terrorism in Africa. The 1107th ministerial session discussed mechanisms for strengthening regional organisations' capacity in preventing and combating terrorism and violent extremism. Towards this end, the AU Commission was tasked with a list of activities including among others, the establishment of regional counter-terrorism centres to support national efforts in preventing and combating terrorism.

At the 1111st ministerial session, the PSC considered the utilisation of development and deradicalisation as levers for countering terrorism and violent extremism in the continent. The most important of the decisions that the PSC adopted on this session is its endorsement of and emphasis on the use of dialogue and negotiation as important tools for countering terrorism. Additionally, indicating this important

policy shift from a military dominated response to one that puts premium on the use of the socio-cultural, development, environment, governance and humanitarian interventions as primary tools whose implementation the military response supports and facilitates, the PSC, echoing the proposition in [our analysis](#), underscored the need 'to ensure the effective presence of the state and provision of basic public/social services in their entire territories.'

Small arms and light weapons

The threat posed by the proliferation and illicit circulation of SALW as well as the issue of nuclear non-proliferation in Africa were also among the themes that received PSC's attention in 2022. The 1072nd session dedicated to Mine Action in Africa assessed the status of efforts in the continent in clearing anti-personnel landmines and explosive remnants of war from the territories of member States. While noting the progress attained in clearing anti-personnel mines, the increasing use of IEDs by non-State armed groups and terrorist groups was noted with deep concern. The 1085th session addressed the issue of disarmament and control of illicit SALW in Africa. A noteworthy concern emphasised at the session was the growing threat posed due to the illegal use of new weapons such as Autonomous Weapons Systems and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) by criminal groups.

The 1071st and 1127th sessions were committed to briefings on the implementation of relevant instruments on nuclear non-proliferation in Africa, particularly the African Nuclear-Weapon- Free-Zone Treaty (Treaty of Pelindaba). Recent global developments relating to the possible use of nuclear weapons have been part of the factors that initiated the PSC's interest in convening these sessions during 2022. Further to calling on all African and global actors to continue committing towards nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, these sessions were also critical in emphasising the importance for Africa of ensuring peaceful use of nuclear energy and technology for economic and developmental purposes.

The 1105th session was dedicated to the annual commemoration of the Africa Amnesty Month. The PSC, apart from expressing deep concern over the continued proliferation of SALW and emphasizing the need for strengthening the safe keeping of stockpiles

and arms depots, tasked the AU Commission to consider continent wide legal instrument on SALW as part of its effort to bolster continental mechanisms for addressing the scourge of illicit SALW.

Climate and security – PSC taking the security dimension of climate for inclusion in AU’s main policy platform on climate

With an African nation – Egypt – hosting the 27th Conference of the Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (COP 27), climate change was another important thematic issue which received significant attention during 2022. Two sessions were committed to this thematic issue and one of these was held at ministerial level. The 1079th session drew attention to the importance of an African Common Position on climate change and emphasised the need to mobilise predictable and sustainable climate financing, including through the establishment of an African Climate Fund – the formation of which was decided at the 984th Summit level PSC session.

Convened a few days ahead of the commencement of COP 27, the 1114th ministerial session encouraged all member States of the AU to speak in one voice and effectively promote a common position at the COP 27. Taking necessary steps towards improving resilience, a critical approach for Africa in combating the adverse effects of climate change, including by addressing the particular needs and vulnerabilities of African Island countries as a follow up to initiatives in the Marrakech COP22, was among the key issues emphasised at the sessions. Most significantly, in a major development that sought to bring the security dimension of climate change to the centre of the mainstream policy processes on climate change, this ministerial level session called for the ‘inclusion of discussion on climate and security in the agenda of the AU Assembly Committee of Heads of State and Government on Climate Change (CAHOSCC).’

Humanitarian crises and action

Two sessions were committed in 2022 to the PSC’s standing thematic agenda on humanitarian issues. The first of these, the 1081st session, formed the PSC’s annual briefing on the state of humanitarian actions

in the continent. The PSC expressed concern over the worsening of the humanitarian situation on the continent and the growing shrinking humanitarian space and the attacks on humanitarian actors. Of significant note is the PSC’s strong condemnation against the use of starvation as instrument of war and the conditionality of humanitarian access. This theme also took center stage during the AU Extraordinary Summit in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea where the Assembly adopted a decision on the humanitarian situation.

The second and 1083rd session addressed the nexus between food insecurity and conflict in Africa. It is for the first time that the PSC held a session with specific focus on food insecurity and conflict as a standalone agenda. The PSC strongly condemned ‘any kind of conditionality for food access and use of starvation as an instrument of war.’ It also emphasized the need for developing ‘an integrated platform combining early warning systems for famine and violent conflict that could add important data and the missing link to assess famine, drought and conflict risk more comprehensively while advancing anticipatory humanitarian action in fragile and conflict-affected settings.’ The AU Commission was also requested to strengthen the linkage between humanitarian assistance, development, and peace- building, with a view to enhance greater cooperation and coordination between actors in humanitarian assistance, development cooperation and peacebuilding.

New thematic agenda

Although not a completely new topic for the PSC to explore, the agenda item of the 1097th session on ‘emerging technology and new media’ was discussed as a separate thematic issue for the first time in 2022. This session served to examine ways of harvesting the benefits of new and emerging technologies for advancing democratic governance and peace and security while adopting measures for addressing their adverse consequences.

The Inaugural Engagement between the PSC and the AUCIL which took place as an agenda item of PSC’s 1120th was also a new joint engagements introduced in 2022. The meeting had a specific focus on cybersecurity and particularly the applicability of international law to cyberspace. One of the key

outcomes of the meeting was the agreement reached on the need for a Common African Position on the application of international law on cyberspace. In this regard, the PSC requested the AUCIL to prepare a draft statement on the 'Application of International Law to Cyberspace' and submit to the PSC. Although the importance of regularising engagements between the two organs was underscored, no decision was made to institutionalise the meeting on a specific periodic basis.

Other thematic issues

In addition to these, sessions were also committed during the year to commemoration of amnesty month, living together in peace and prevention of hate crimes and genocide. 2022's commemoration of amnesty month which constituted the 1105th PSC session was conducted in Lomé, Togo. This is the first time that the amnesty month was commemorated outside of the AU headquarters, allowing enhanced opportunity for creating awareness among people on the implementation of the initiative. The PSC's annual commemoration of the 'International Day of Living Together in Peace' took place at its 1084th session where, among other points, the PSC emphasised the importance of consolidating democracy, rule of law, good governance and human rights and the need to advance mutual respect for diversity. PSC's 1088th session was dedicated to its annual commemoration of prevention of hate crimes and genocide. At the session, the PSC once again called on the Chairperson of the AU Commission to appoint an AU Special Envoy on the Prevention of Hate Crimes and the Crime of Genocide, a request first articulated by the PSC at its 989th session held on 12 April 2021.

X CONSULTATIVE MEETINGS/ENGAGEMENTS

In 2022, PSC conducted most of its regular consultative meetings with various AU, UN and other partner organisations. It also institutionalised new consultative meetings and engagements with various AU bodies.

The 5th Informal Joint Retreat and the 13th Annual Joint Consultative Meeting of the AUPSC and EU Political and Security Committee (EUPSC) took place on 9 and 10 June, respectively. Although some key issues were

deliberated between the two at 2022's consultative meeting including the expansion of terrorist networks in the Sahel region and the issue of budgeting and EU funds to the AU, particularly in light of the shift from APF to EPF, the two sides could not adopt a joint-communiqué due to the lack of agreement on the inclusion of language referring to the war in Ukraine.

The 7th Annual Joint Informal Seminar and the 16th Annual Consultative Meeting of the AUPSC and UNSC took place on 13 and 14 October, respectively. As captured in the Joint-Communiqué adopted only a day after the meetings, the informal seminar served the two Councils to 'exchange views on strengthening cooperation between Members of the UNSC and AUPSC by improving relevant working methods and having shared goals'. The Consultative meeting on the other hand addressed substantive issues such as the situation in west Africa and the Sahel as well as in the GLR (particularly CAR and DRC).

The 5th Annual Consultative Meeting between the PSC and the UN Peace Building Commission (UNPBC) took place on 28 November. The consultative meeting, which has been taking place regularly since 2018, has the basic purpose of strengthening collaboration and cooperation between the AU and UN in peacebuilding efforts in Africa. This year's consultative meeting had a specific focus on the nexus between climate-change and peacebuilding. It served to reflect on approaches for mitigating adverse impacts of climate change on peacebuilding in Africa.

The PSC's engagement with the PRC Sub-Committee on Human Rights, Democracy and Governance was one of the new engagements of the PSC introduced in 2022. The engagement which constituted PSC's 1095th session was one of the various meetings convened during the year to bring attention to the need for better complementarity and synergy between AU's normative frameworks and tools addressing governance issues and those committed to addressing issues of peace and security. Noting the importance of joint activities between the PSC and the PRC Sub-Committee on HRDG, the PSC decided to regularise the joint engagement as an annual event to be held in the month of August each year.

The experience sharing session between the PSC and AGA Platform members held at PSC's 1098th meeting was another new engagement which commenced

in 2022. Forming the first engagement between the PSC and AGA, the session served to bring attention to the growing trend of democratic reversals in the continent. Echoing the decision of the 8th High-Level Seminar on Peace and Security in Africa to have an exhaustive analysis of the 2000 Lomé Declaration on UCG and the AGA, the session reiterated the call for the AU Commission to conduct this review exercise in order to ensure the sufficiency of these instruments to effectively deter the occurrence of UCG. The PSC also decided to institutionalise the meeting between the PSC and the AGA Platom as part of a standing meeting to be held on annual basis.

The inaugural Annual Consultative Meeting between PSC and CSOs which took place on 14 September constituted one more new consultative meetings launched in 2022. The central purpose of the meeting was to clarify the format for cooperation and coordination between the PSC and CSOs, particularly in the implementation of the Accra Declaration on UCG in Africa and the Malabo Decision of the 16th Extraordinary Session of the AU Assembly, in relation to UCG. No publicly available outcome document was produced for this inaugural meeting in 2022.

XI OTHER ACTIVITIES

RETREAT

The 14th Annual Retreat of the PSC on its Working Methods took place from 17 to 19 November 2022, in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe. As indicated in the [Conclusions](#), the retreat served to address key issues related to PSC's works and working methods. Among others, some of the issues covered include the Final Draft Africa Consensus Paper on Predictable, Adequate and Sustainable Financing for AU PSOs; the status of activation of the Ministerial Committee on Counter Terrorism and the PSC Sub-Committee on Sanctions; the management of PSC working documents and the silence procedure; regular PSC engagement with the Chairperson of the AU Commission and the improved effectiveness of informal consultations; and the PSC's discharge of its mandate and execution of the 2022 budget.

The PSC also conducted its 2nd Annual Joint Retreat with the APRM from 14 to 15 November 2022, in Durban, South Africa. This year's joint-retreat was

held in line with the decision of the inaugural retreat and the 1069th PSC session to have the convening on a yearly basis. Increasing governance related crises in the continent and the need to invest more on preventive approaches in order to avert governance issues from becoming security concerns formed part of the discussions of the joint retreat.

FIELD VISITS

Compared to the previous year, the number of field missions the PSC conducted during 2022 has shown a slight decrease. While the PSC undertook field visits to six countries in 2021, it conducted visits only to four countries in 2022. These were Burundi, Somalia, South Sudan and Togo.

The mission to Burundi was conducted in the context of the PSC's engagement on the Great Lakes Region (GLR). The initial plan was to visit more countries within the region. However this could not be achieved due to increasing tensions resulting from the crisis in eastern DRC.

The field mission to Togo was also different in that it was conducted in the context of commemorating this year's Africa Amnesty Month and not as a mission targeted at assessing a conflict/crisis situation. Despite the PSC's plans to undertake a visit to Sudan in February, it was unable to conduct the visit due to lack of readiness to receive the PSC delegation on the part of Sudanese authorities.

Country	Date	Chair	Focus of Mission
Burundi	20 to 22 June	Republic of Congo	The mission served to discuss current peace and security concerns in the GLR. To this end, the PSC delegation held discussions with key stakeholders including H.E. Domitien Ndayizeze, former President of the Republic of Burundi and Chairperson of the AU Panel of the Wise; ICGLR Executive Secretariat; Force Commander of the Extended Joint Verification Mechanism (EJVM); Ambassador Pierre Claver Ndayicariye, the Chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Independent; Dr. Sixte Vigny Nimuraba, the Chair of the Independent National Commission on Human Rights and the Diplomatic Corps accredited to Bujumbura.
Somalia	19 to 22 July	Djibouti	The mission served to assess progress made and outstanding challenges, as well as to support the next steps in implementing the decisions of PSC's 1068th Communique and UNSC Resolution 2628 (2022) on the mandates of ATMIS.
South Sudan	22 to 25 February	Kenya	Forming the sixth visit of the PSC to South Sudan since the outbreak of civil war, the visit served for the PSC to gather first-hand information regarding the political, economic and humanitarian situation on the ground. It particularly served to observe implementation of transitional tasks as the 2023 national elections fast approach.
Togo	04 to 7 September	Ghana	In commemoration of Africa Amnesty Month, the PSC held an interactive session on the implementation of the initiative, in the context of the AU Master Roadmap of Practical Steps to Silence the Guns in Africa by 2030 and AU Agenda 2063.

Field Visits 2022

XII 2022 AS A YEAR HIGHLIGHTING THE URGENT NEED FOR ADDRESSING THE SLIDING EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PSC

As the year that marked the 20th anniversary of the founding of the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC), 2022 highlights both how far the PSC has come in establishing itself as a leading peace and security actor in Africa and how its effectiveness is affected by existing and emerging challenges. For the PSC to deliver optimally on its mandate in leading the AU to play active part in the maintenance of peace and security in Africa, it has become increasingly apparent that it needs to address the issues that are expanding the gap between its potential and ambition on the one hand and the reality of its delivery and the peace and security dynamics of the continent on the other hand. Most of these issues PSC faced in 2022 are not unique to 2022 but are carried over from previous years.

Compared to the previous two years, the PSC has organized and carried out its activities more predictably. For example, it fully reinstated and implemented the monthly rotation of chairing it according to the alphabetical order of its member states, illustrating its ability for self-correction and improvement. Cognizant of the major regression witnessed in upholding the AU norm banning UCG due to the upsurge of military coups unprecedented since the turn of the century, the PSC, rather than responding in a business-as-usual way, convened a continental forum on UCG leading to the adoption of the Accra Declaration, which informed the extraordinary AU summit in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea on UCG.

The PSC also continued its engagement with the various hotspots on the continent, albeit with decisions of varying degrees of robustness. Certainly, the peace and security landscape of the continent in 2022 as highlighted above remain worrisome. Yet, as developments in some of the cases the PSC is actively seized with show, it is not all doom and gloom. Hopeful developments were also registered, including those that demonstrate the continuing importance of the continental body at the very least in providing the cover necessary for peace and security diplomacy. Admittedly, while success, taking the form of effective

resolution of conflicts, remain rare. In a time of the least minimum of ambitions, it (success), in most cases, involved holding a formal meeting (thereby putting the situation on the spotlight) and inducing the adoption of some measures for mitigating conflicts and/or their consequences.

The most notable of such successes, which actually promises more than mitigating the conflict, at the minimum, by silencing the guns (negative peace), is the progress in the AU mediation of the deadliest conflict in northern Ethiopia. It led to not only the signing of the ceasefire agreement in Pretoria but also the subsequent declaration on modalities for implementation of the Pretoria agreement in the talks held in Nairobi Kenya. At the very least it ended the conduct of direct hostilities, in so doing spared the civilian populations caught in the cross fire from mayhem and death by armed violence. It is worth noting that one of the factors that facilitated progress in the mediation process was the expansion of the mediation structure by the AU Commission into a panel made up of the High Representative for the Horn of Africa, former Kenyan President and former South African Deputy President and member of the Panel of the Wise.³⁰

This along with the acceptance of the role of the UN and the US as observers was critical to bolster the confidence of conflict parties in the mediation process, thereby enabling the parties, drained by the cost of the violent war, to agree to a cessation of hostilities.

The Luanda-process initiated after the AU Assembly held in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea in May 2022 tasked Angola, as Chairperson of the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), to facilitate talks between Rwanda and DRC- has helped avoid the risk of the tension between the two countries erupting into full blown fighting. This AU initiated process along with the East African Community's Nairobi process on Eastern DRC also created the framework for addressing the conflict involving the M23, which started surrendering territories it seized as per the leader's decision of the mini summit of the joint Luanda and Nairobi processes.

The AU through its representative, working with the UN and IGAD representatives, also contributed to ending the tension between the leaders of the South Sudan peace agreement that brought the peace agreement to the brink of collapse and the country to the edge of relapse back to fighting. This diplomatic intervention saved the RTGoNU from the threat of collapse and helped to restore working relationship between the leaders of the major parties in RTGoNU.

As called for by the PSC, in Mali agreement was reached with ECOWAS on the timeline for the transition, leading to the lifting of financial and trade sanctions imposed on Mali. While the violence involving terrorist groups persisted in northern Mozambique, the troops from SADC and Rwanda contributed to reduction of the scale of violence compared to previous years. The level of displacement of civilian population due to the violence has dropped from what it was at the height of the violence in Cabo Delgado.

The other important accomplishment of the PSC was the completion of the protracted consultations and negotiations over the transition of the AMISOM into the ATMIS. What is significant about this is the commitment for the progressive drawdown and eventual exit of ATMIS within a fixed time of 24 months. It is also worth noting that, apart from the critical role the PSC played in 2021 by rejecting the attempt by the incumbent president to illegally prolong his stay in power, the PSC continued mobilizing its support for the smooth conduct and conclusion of the electoral process in Somalia and AMISOM/ATMIS contributed meaningfully to the eventual successful conclusion of the protracted election by providing the requisite security protection.

The other most notable development in the organization of the work of the PSC was the launch of the electronic documentation of PSC's work. An important aspect that enhanced transparency and visibility around the work and sessions of the PSC is the PAPS repository. This has become the portal for maintaining and sharing timely information and background documents to the general public on sessions and activities of the PSC.

Not with standing the foregoing and on balance, the overall picture in the work of the PSC indicates continuing slide in the effectiveness of this body. One of the manifestations of this slide that has been in the

³⁰ See Statement of the AU Commission Chairperson (6 October 2022).

making in previous years is the increasing shift on the part of AU member states towards dealing with peace and security issues primarily at regional levels, leaving the PSC struggling to play catch up and take secondary supportive role as opposed to the primary responsibility assigned to it under the PSC Protocol.

There are two examples from 2022 that illustrate this worrying development. As terrorist attacks rage and wreak havoc in northern Mozambique, PSC's attempts to play its part in responding to this crisis were met with resistance to a point where the PSC was forced to drop the situation from its plan of having it on its agenda. The Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), while deploying the SADC Mission to Mozambique (SAMIM), did not engage the PSC, despite the fact that SAMIM was deployed under the ASF framework, established under the PSC Protocol. It was only early in 2022, months after the deployment of SAMIM, that the PSC held a session on the situation and endorsed the mission. This trend of AU member states opting to use regional arrangements in responding to conflicts rather than the PSC is also reflected in the decision of the EAC to deploy a regional force to Eastern DRC, a decision taken again without the engagement of the PSC.

It is not clear whether this increasing use of regional arrangements by member states without involving the PSC is a result of a deliberate and strategic decision. However it is doubtful that the resort to such *ad hoc* approaches is a result of strategic decision for marginalizing the PSC, if one considers the fact that after launching such regional initiatives member states often come to the PSC seeking its engagement, as a means to facilitate mobilization of funds and wider legal and diplomatic support. But this trend, which is a continuation of *ad hoc* security arrangements such as the MNJTF and G5 Sahel, also seems to be a manifestation of the slow pace of engagement of the PSC. Indeed, the lack of proactive engagement of the PSC in putting forward concrete options for responding to emerging crisis meant that PSC was found to be, more often than not, much behind the curve and hence leaving the space for states with immediate interest to opt for initiating regional arrangements. It is also worth noting that the resultant marginal and late entry of the PSC is also a reflection of gaps in the relationship between the PSC and sub-regional bodies and mechanisms and the misuse of the principle of subsidiarity. This principle is viewed as entailing

acting alone by regional bodies rather than by pulling together the comparative advantages of both regions and the PSC and the principle of complementarity under Article 16 of the PSC Protocol by which states parties to the Protocol are bound.

However, the implications of this increasing regional based use *ad hoc* responses to crises and conflicts go far beyond the marginalization of the PSC as the lead peace and security actor on the continent. It engenders fragmentation of the APSA. Deprived of the standardising norms of the APSA and the doctrines AU developed from its practices, the deployment of responses primarily dictated by sheer convenience and direct vested interest of participating states lead to inconsistent practices and regression in compliance with common standards, impeding the consolidation of the APSA and the latter's increasing close workings and coordination with the global collective security anchored on the UN Charter. As the decision of the MNJTF to go multidimensional only in 2022 illustrate, such security responses of convenience and opportunity also tend to be almost exclusively militaristic.

While the wider implications of the increasing neighbourhood focused *ad hoc* security responses deserve serious attention in the light of the past two decades of investment in building the APSA, for purposes of the PSC they underscore the imperative for it to be more proactive and assume more active role as envisaged in the PSC Protocol for leading the mobilization of responses and the coordination of the role of regional actors. There is also a need to work on mobilizing the interest in and active use by member states of the APSA. Such mobilization is critical to ensure implementation of the decision of the PSC on the first lessons learning forum on peace support operations and the ASF, that directed that 'the ASF framework should be utilized in the mandating, implementation, management, and oversight of all PSOs going forward to ensure enhanced AU-RECs/RMs relations and collaboration in the prevention, response and resolution of conflicts on the continent.'³²

The other issue affecting the effectiveness of the PSC is the decision-to-implementation gap. While this is a general problem that affects the AU as a whole and has been an issue for the PSC, indications are that this gap in implementation of PSC decisions has widened significantly recently and in 2022. One manifestation

of this concerns the operationalization of mechanisms PSC decided to establish. For example, lack of operationalization of the monitoring and support mechanism on the transition in Guinea more than one year after the decision on its establishment led the PSC to reiterate its call for the operationalization of the mechanism.

The other area in decision-to-implementation gap concerns provision of briefings and submission of reports within agreed timelines. With respect to specific situations, for example, presentation of briefings to the PSC on Guinea has not been regular despite the fact that the PSC called for quarterly briefings on Guinea. Similarly, despite its request for monthly briefing, the briefing on Sudan has not been as regular.

Financing is one of the factors for these gaps in implementation of PSC decisions. Illustrating this perennial issue, for example, the PSC at its 1087th session, in relation to the operationalization of transition supporting mechanisms, requested mobilization of necessary resources for the operationalization of these mechanisms on Mali, Guinea and Burkina Faso. Admittedly, this financing challenge in part arises due to the fact that more often than not decisions are adopted without proper assessment and consideration of how their implementation would be financed.

Related but separate from finance is the gap in institutional capacity required for implementation. The size of the staffing capacity at the disposal of the PSC and the APSA writ large remains utterly inadequate, unavoidably creating gaps for effectively³¹ tracking implementation. AU political missions and/or liaison offices are also hamstring by lack of staffing and other resources. Calling for strengthening the capacity of these bodies and their adequate resourcing has become a common refrain in PSC's engagement with country or regional situations in respect of which the liaison offices are set up.

But funding and capacity limitations are not the only factors. Working methods issues in decision-making including how PSC decisions are crafted and the degree to which due consideration is given to the

availability of capacity for implementation and for regular review of progress of implementation also contribute to the decision-to-implementation gap. It is not uncommon to find the PSC adopting important decisions that can add value to the situation under consideration but with no timeline and mechanism for the follow up of implementation of such decisions.

The lack of consistency in engaging conflict situations and in enforcing AU norms also raises credibility issues for the PSC, hence affecting its effectiveness. A case in point is PSC's failure to sanction Chad for UCG. Furthermore, while the PSC expressed its condemnation of use of force against protesters in the case of Guinea, it failed to do the same in the case of Sudan and Chad in its consideration of countries in transition.

With respect to some conflict situations on which AU's role and influence has been limited, notably Libya, the fact that the PSC held only one session may not be without consequence in further marginalising the AU. Of even greater significance in this respect is the lack of implementation and follow up of some of the PSC's decisions, notably the need for enhancing AU's Office as critical mechanism for expanding AU's presence on the ground and its active participation in the efforts towards the resolution of the crisis in Libya. It is interesting to note that the PSC, manifesting failure for getting its decision executed, recalled the urgent need for the AU Commission to ensure that the AU Mission in Libya is relocated to Tripoli and is sufficiently capacitated, in order to enable it to more effectively discharge its mandate and adequately support the AU's efforts on Libya.³²

³¹ 1129th session of the PSC on the adoption of the conclusions of the Inaugural Lessons Learning Forum on AU PSSOs and the ASF, 20 December 2022.

³² PSC, Communiqué of the 1091st session (29 June 2022).



MEDIA AND RESEARCH SERVICES

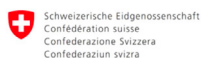
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Amani Africa is an independent African based policy research; training and consulting think tank with a specialization and primary focus on African multilateral policy processes, particularly those relating to the African Union.

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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