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**REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION ON THE
CHALLENGES FACED BY AU-LED PEACE SUPPORT OPERATIONS**

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. Africa put in place in 2002 the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), which serves as its blueprint for promoting peace, security and stability and for safeguarding the prime interest of the African citizens. The APSA works in coordination with the African Governance Architecture (AGA), which underpins AU shared values. The Peace and Security Council, as the continental decision-making organ on peace and security is the prime implementer of the APSA. In discharging its mandate of promoting peace, security and stability, the PSC uses a number of institutions, tools and assets. One of these tools/assets is deployment of peace support operations with the objective of creating the requisite conditions for addressing a crisis/conflict at hand. Since its establishment in 2002, the AU, through its PSC, has deployed several peace support operations/ peacekeeping operations.

2. This report is being submitted pursuant to the directive of the PSC for the Commission to put together information regarding contexts of various peace support operations, the issues and challenges that were encountered/continue to be encountered in these operations, the lessons drawn or to be drawn and proposals for overcoming the challenges at hand and better prepare future peace support operations. In looking at challenges facing AU-led Peace Support Operations (PSO), it is important to start by defining the types of peace support operations, as follows:

- a. **AU Mandated PSO** – refers to a PSO wherein the AU has full, direct and complete management, command and control over/of the PSO.
- b. **AU authorized/endorsed/approved** – refers to a PSO wherein the AU provides support to a PSO undertaken by another organization without being responsible for full, direct and complete management, command and control over/of the PSO.
- c. **AU Hybrid** – refers to a PSO wherein the AU and another organization have full, direct and complete management and control over/of the PSO.

II. BACKGROUND

3. The African Union (AU) has since its official inauguration in July 2002, mandated, authorised and approved numerous Peace Support Operations (PSO), namely,

- a. **African Union Observers Missions (I, II, III, IV) in Comoros, now closed**
- b. **African Union Electoral and Security Assistance Mission in the Comoros, now closed**
- c. **African Union Mission in Ethiopia-Eritrea (2000 - now closed)** – this PSO was mandated by the AU to complement, assist and cooperate with the UNMEE, to establish and maintain security in the TSZ in order to monitor the implementation of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea
- d. **African Union Mission in Liberia (2003 - now closed)** – this PSO was mandated by the AU to provide advice on all military aspects relating to the conflict and to represent the AU in the Commission for Disarmament, the JVT and the JMC,

- e. **African Union Mission in Cote d'Ivoire (2003 – now closed)** – this PSO was mandated by the AU to provide advice on all military aspects relating to the conflict including representing in the various fora relating to military aspects of the conflict
- f. **African Union Mission in Sudan (2004 – now closed)** – this PSO was mandated by the AU to monitor and observe compliance with the Humanitarian Ceasefire Agreement of 08 April 2004 and all such agreements in the future, to assist in the process of confidence-building and to contribute to a secure environment for the delivery of humanitarian relief, and contribute to the improvement of the security situation throughout Darfur,
- g. **AU/UN Joint Verification Team in the DRC (2005 – now closed)** – this PSO was mandated by the AU to monitor the DRC – Rwanda borders,
- h. **African Union Mission for Support to the Elections in the Comoros (2006 – now closed),**
- i. **AU Observer Mission in Northern Uganda (2006 – now closed)** – this PSO was mandated by the AU to monitor the implementation of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement,
- j. **AU Special Task Force in Burundi (2006 – now closed)** – this PSO was mandated by the AU to protect FNL – PLALIPHETHU political leaders returning from exile and to protect the external perimeter of the Assembly and Demobilization Areas,
- k. **African Union Mission in Somalia (69th PSC meeting of 19 January 2007 – to date)** – this PSO was mandated by the AU to support dialogue and reconciliation in Somalia, working with all stakeholders, - to provide, as appropriate, protection to the TFIs and their key infrastructure, to enable them carry out their functions, - to assist in the implementation of the National Security and Stabilization Plan of Somalia, particularly the effective reestablishment and training of all inclusive Somali security forces, bearing in mind the programs already being implemented by some of Somalia's bilateral and multilateral partners, - to provide, within capabilities and as appropriate, technical and other support to the disarmament and stabilization efforts, - to monitor, in areas of deployment of its forces, the security situation, - to facilitate, as may be required and within capabilities, humanitarian operations, including the repatriation and reintegration of refugees and the resettlement of IDPs, and - to protect its personnel, installations and equipment, including the right of self-defense; stabilise the current situation in order to create conditions for the conduct of humanitarian activities and National Reconciliation,
- l. **African Union – United Nations Mission in Darfur (authorised by the 79th PSC meeting of 22 June 2007 - to date)** – this PSO was authorised by the AU (i) to contribute to the restoration of necessary security conditions for the safe provision of humanitarian assistance and facilitate full humanitarian access throughout Darfur, (ii) to contribute to the protection of civilian populations under imminent threat of physical violence and prevent attacks against civilians, within its capability and areas of deployment, without prejudice to the responsibility of the Government of the Sudan, (iii) to monitor, observe compliance with and verify the implementation of various ceasefire agreements signed since 2004, as well as assist with the implementation of the Darfur Peace Agreement and any subsequent agreements, (iv) to assist the political process in order to ensure that it is inclusive, and to support the African Union-United Nations joint mediation in its efforts to broaden and deepen commitment to the peace process, (v) to contribute to a

secure environment for economic reconstruction and development, as well as the sustainable return of internally displaced persons and refugees to their homes, (vi) to contribute to the promotion of respect for, and protection of, human rights and fundamental freedoms in Darfur, (vii) to assist in the promotion of the rule of law in Darfur, and (viii) to monitor the security situation at the Sudan's borders with Chad and the Central African Republic;

- m. **Regional Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the Lords' Resistance Army (2011 – now closed)** – this PSO was authorised by the AU to strengthen the operational capabilities of the countries affected by the atrocities of the LRA, to create an environment conducive to the stabilization of the affected areas, free of LRA atrocities and facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid to affected areas,
- n. **African-led International Support Mission in Mali (2012 – now closed)** – this PSO was authorised to (i) to ensuring the security of the transitional institutions; (ii) restructuring and reorganizing the Malian security and defense forces; and (iii) restoring State authority over the northern part of the country and combating terrorist and criminal networks.
- o. **African-led International Support Mission to the Central African Republic (2013 – now closed)** – to conduct the following tasks; the protection of civilians and the restoration of security and public order, through the implementation of appropriate measures; the stabilization of the country and the restoration of the authority of the central Government; the reform and restructuring of the defense and security sector; and the creation of conditions conducive for the provision of humanitarian assistance to population in need
- p. **The Multi National Joint Task Force against Boko Haram (authorised by the 484th PSC meeting of 29 January 2015 – to date)** – to create a safe and secure environment in the areas affected by the activities of Boko Haram and other terrorist groups, in order to significantly reduce violence against civilians and other abuses, including sexual-and gender-based violence, in full compliance with international law, including international humanitarian law and the UN HRDDP, facilitate the implementation, by the LCBC Member States and Benin, of overall stabilization programmes in the affected areas, including the full restoration of State authority and the return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees; and facilitate, within the limit of its capabilities, humanitarian operations and the delivery of assistance to the affected populations,
- q. **G5 Sahel (authorised by the 679 PSC meeting of 13 April 2017 – to date)** – to combat terrorism, drug trafficking and human trafficking in order to create a secure environment by eradicating the actions of the Terrorist Armed Groups and other organized criminal groups, with a view to restoring security and peace in accordance with international law; Contributing as necessary to the restoration of state authority and the return of displaced persons and refugees; Facilitate humanitarian operations and the delivery of aid to the affected populations to the maximum extent possible; Contribute to the implementation of development actions in the space of the G5 Sahel.
- r. **Southern African Development Cooperation Preventative Mission in the Kingdom of Lesotho (2018 – now closed).**

4. The tasks undertaken by AU led PSOs, as noted above, have varied from creation of stability and reducing the threat of armed groups to assisting in preventing an escalation of

crisis, facilitating humanitarian assistance, protection of civilians, extension of state authority, training of national security forces, protection of host government installations and personnel, etc. The varied tasks and functions that AU-led PSOs have had to perform has contributed to the notion that mandates of PSOs are too wide and generic, thus pose challenges relating to their implementation and lead to a lack of a clear exit strategy.

5. Deployment of AU led PSOs has been informed by the evolution in the typology of conflicts. The conflict areas that the AU led PSOs have been deployed to, have been characterised by lack of capacity of the host nation to deal with the conflict, lack of clear political strategy of the belligerents, refusal to negotiate a peace settlement, indiscriminate use of violence including use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) against non-combatants targeting vulnerable groups such as women, children, the elderly, direct attacks against mission personnel, targeted assassinations of host nation/government personnel and those supporting a peaceful settlement, etc.

6. It is a result of the changing conflict landscape that AU led PSOs have evolved from the traditional peacekeeping posture of keeping clearly identifiable belligerents apart and who have agreed to a ceasefire, to PSOs creating space for peace to be kept in areas where there is no peace agreement. In other words, the AU has leaned towards robust PSOs which are sometimes referred to as peace enforcement. It needs to be noted that in all instances though, such a deployment is in support of a political process to resolve conflicts in the area concerned and is underpinned by, amongst others, the AU's compliance with provisions of Responsibility to Protect, Protection of Civilians and the provisions of the OAU 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration adopted by the 21st Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 26 May 2013.

7. These developments in respect of the evolution of PSOs has necessitated the enhancement of linkages between the PSOs to other elements of the African Peace and Security Architecture and the African Governance Architecture. One example is the relationship between PSOs and the AU Panel of the Wise including their complimentary roles.

8. The evolution thereof of AU led PSOs in terms of tasks, functions, composition has brought up new challenges that have not been encountered in traditional peacekeeping.

III. CHALLENGES IN AU LED PSOs

9. This Report will in looking at challenges, identify both strategic and tactical issues in the overall cycle or stages of AU led PSOs, namely, force preparation (in this report, force refers to civilian, police and military personnel) (before the forces are deployed and are still in their home country), force employment (when forces are in the mission area or Area of Operation – AoO) and post- force employment (when forces have returned home from the AoO) phases. It needs noting that the stages referred to above do overlap and there are activities that cut across the stages.

10. The following are challenges in AU-led PSOs. These are;

- a. African Union, Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms and AU Member States working relationship.

- b. Funding.
- c. Area of Operation.
- d. Organisational structures to support operations including Mission Management.
- e. Personnel training and skills.
- f. Recommendations.

11. African Union, Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms and AU Member States working relationship.

- a. It was also noted that there is a need to ensure harmonisation of the decision making process amongst the various levels, namely, continental, regional and national to ensure preparation and availability of capabilities when so needed, and optimal utilisation of resources and synergy of efforts. In addition, it has been noted that there is a need to have a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities amongst the various actors. Who is the primary respondent, what are the roles of the other actors, how can synergy be attained, are there any institutional mechanisms amongst the various levels to enhance accountability and responsibility, etcetera?
- b. Another element for consideration in this regard is the need to have clear layout transition architecture amongst the various levels. It is envisaged that PSOs will transition from AU to RECs/RMs or vice versa. Efforts in creating a robust working relationship amongst the various elements would enhance transitions including exit strategies.
- c. The availability of capabilities to be employed in AU led PSOs has not necessarily been optimal. In some AU mandated PSOs, the AU has encountered challenges in raising the requisite number of uniformed personnel including equipment from AU Member States meant for use in the Mission Area either due to inability to provide the required capabilities or reluctance to do so. For example, the AU has been able to deploy to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) only three of the 12 military helicopters approved by United Nations Security Council Resolution 2036 (2012) because there are challenges in AU Member States raising the additional numbers required.
- d. The AU authorised or approved PSOs such as the Regional Country Initiative against the Lords' Resistance Army (RCI- LRA), the Multi National Joint Task Force against Boko Haram (MNJTF) and the G5 Sahel do not seem to have had a challenge in raising the requisite capabilities for PSOs, however, there have been indications of shortfall of equipment required to conduct PSOs.

12. Funding

- a. There has been (and still is) a mismatch between the mandate/approval/authorization and the financial resources provided to the PSOs. The financial resources provided have not always been matched to the tasks that the PSO is supposed to undertake resulting in provision of funding externally by partners. This scenario has resulted in AU led PSOs being partner dependent in their conduct of operations and opened opportunities for partners to, amongst

other things, determine or influence the numbers of personnel in the PSO, the functions/tasks to be carried out, objectives of the PSO, timelines for the PSO, command and control including mission management of the PSO. One of the factors that is informing the AU's position, is the current inability of the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) to take over security tasks of holding and securing key population centres.

- b. Another aspect of funding that continues to be a challenge is the categories and levels or scales of mission support to be provided during the lifespan of the PSO and beyond. Examples here are communication infrastructure amongst the various Headquarters in the AoO and the contingents, accommodation, re-imbursment for Contingent Owned Equipment (COE), planning and generation of resources for Quick Impact Projects (QIPs), dealing with cases of Post-Traumatic Syndrome (PTS) of personnel deployed when they are back in their own country. In the current dispensation in AU-led PSOs, Member States are the ones who are left with the responsibility to cater for such challenges and numerous T/PCCs have expressed a need for continued support from the mandating organisation. Troop and Police Contributing Countries (T/PCCs) have also in some AU-led PSOs expressed concern about the scales, rates and periodicity of re-imbursment for COE against their (T/PCCs) ability to maintain, replenish the required equipment in adverse weather conditions in the AoO.
- c. Due to the nature of AU-led PSOs which are characterised by the adoption of an offensive posture, agile mobility of forces in the AoO has become critical. AU-led PSOs conduct counter – insurgency operations which inherently presupposes that forces conducting such operations must be highly mobile and have quick response capabilities. It is therefore imperative that funding is indeed comprehensive to cover these requirements.

13. Area of Operation

- a. The evolution of AU-led PSOs has introduced a new element in the realm of PSOs. One of the characteristics of traditional PSOs is that forces are employed in a third country. Over the last few years, however, AU-led PSOs have introduced a new element of wherein operate in their own national territory albeit under the authority of an external mandating organisation. This new element in PSOs has been noticeable in the RCI-LRA, the MNJTF and now the G5 Sahel. This new chapter in PSOs has necessitated a revision of the current PSO regulatory framework such as Rules of Engagement/Directives on the Use of Force, Status of Mission Agreement/Status of Forces Agreement, Strategic Directives, Force Commander's Directives, Police Commissioner's Directives, Compliance and Accountability to International Humanitarian and Human Rights Laws as well as Code of Conduct and Discipline, identification colours to be used, etc. In conducting a review of the PSO regulatory framework, mandating organisation have had to be innovative as there is hardly any references to this new approach to PSOs.

- b. One of the areas where this evolution in PSOs is posing a challenge is the development of an architecture that enables a clear delineation of responsibilities, accountabilities amongst the various entities involved in the PSO. Reference in this regard is made to the mandating organisation (whether AU or RECs/RMs), the host nation/country and other supporting elements such as strategic partners.

14. Organisational structures to support PSOs including Mission Management

- a. The dearth of structures in AU-led PSOs both at the Strategic and Mission levels continues to be a challenge. Due to resource constraints, the structures/organogram that have been set up to support AU-led PSOs have proved to be inadequate. This has, in some instances in the AoO, led to the double hatting of functions in order to accommodate the functions that must be performed. This approach has been applied to AMISOM Mission Headquarters due to the low number of the total staff complement which is below 150 whereas the ratios of other international organisations managing similar size operations are far much higher than those in AMISOM.
- b. Another area that has been noted in AU-led PSOs is the exercise of mission management including command and control of the forces in the AoO. It has been noticeable that in AU mandated PSOs, Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) tend to lean more towards exercising operational control over their capabilities to the extent of diminishing the role of the Force Commander whose functions are on operational control rather than administrative control. This has resulted in the Force Commander being reduced to a Force Coordinator and thus unable to utilise efficiently, effectively and productively the forces under command. Generically in PSOs, the Force Commander exercises operational control over the forces whereas TCCs exercise administrative control.

15. Training, personnel skills and equipment

- a. It has on numerous occasions been noted that some of the personnel that are employed in PSOs have not been adequately prepared or trained to undertake their tasks in the Area of Operation (AoO). This would include matching the personnel to the equipment they will be using in the AoO. Related to this aspect is the deficit of skills required to conduct operational planning and other necessary activities at Strategic Headquarters of the mandating organisations. The low availability of skilled officers to conduct planning for operations coupled with rotation (there are some instances wherein officers have been rotated at once resulting in what is colloquially referred to as block obsolescence – loss of institutional memory at a go) of uniformed personnel at the African Standby Force Planning Elements continues to pose challenges in respect of the ability of the Strategic Headquarters to provide appropriate strategic direction to the Mission..
- b. AU led PSOs continue to lack critical civilian and mission support capacities and capabilities in the AoO due to challenges encountered in their recruitment processes. Even in instances wherein such capacities were authorized, the numbers of personnel deployed were not at the required level. For example, in AMISOM, 63 civilian personnel have been deployed against the AMISOM civilian

personnel approved strength of 70. In the Africa led-International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA) only 54 out of the 173 approved civilian posts were filled whilst in the Africa –led Mission in the Central African Republic (MISCA) only 30 out of the approved 152 civilian posts were filled. This low availability of critical skills is also evident in lack medical specialists such as surgeons, anaesthetists, which has a negative impact on the overall medical support and welfare of the mission personnel.

- c. The role of Member States in ensuring that personnel deployed are credible through proper selection and screening cannot be over-emphasised. It is imperative that of personnel deployed meet the minimum requirements of set skills required and adopt the requisite behaviour in line with the provision of Codes of Conduct and Discipline, International Humanitarian and Human Rights Laws as well as including ensuring timely action taken against personnel in instances of transgressions.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

16. In an effort to ensure that there is optimum coordination, cooperation and clear delineation of responsibilities amongst the AU, RECs/RMs and AU Member States, it is imperative that joint assessments, decision-making and management of PSOs between the AU and RECs/RMs is harmonised.

17. The challenge of funding of AU-led PSOs need to be continuously addressed as it has in impact on the objectives of the PSO, how the PSO conducts its activities, duration of the PSO itself, mission management and post-mission management issues.

18. Since most AU-led PSOs are partner dependant, it has become imperative that robust mechanisms to coordinate the efforts of the parties are necessary both at the strategic level and at the tactical/operational level. This is to ensure that there is no duplication of effort and that resources are utilised optimally to achieve the same objectives.

19. It is considered important that appropriate skilled personnel are employed in AU-led PSOs. The effectiveness and integrity of a PSO is informed and impacted upon by the personnel deployed.

20. Transitions of PSOs including exit or closure needs to have an institutional framework to enable such to be effective, efficient and as seamless as possible.

21. It is also imperative that Strategic Headquarters continues to produce guidelines, polices, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and other relevant documents to enhance the regulatory framework in PSOs and to enhance overall mission management. In order for these functions to be undertaken, it has also been noted that Strategic Headquarters structures need to be enhanced.

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2019-05-22

Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the Challenges Faced by AU-Led Peace Support Operations.

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