2024 ELECTION OF THE 10 MEMBERS OF THE PSC: CONDUCT AND OUTCOME OF THE ELECTIONS

AMANI AFRICA

Media and Research Services

2024 ELECTION OF THE 10 MEMBERS OF THE PSC: CONDUCT AND OUTCOME OF THE ELECTIONS

The election for the 10 members of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) was held on 15 February 2024 at the 44th ordinary session of the Executive Council in line with its delegated power pursuant to Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.106 (VI) of the Sixth Ordinary Session of the Assembly. The outcome of the election was endorsed by the Assembly during its 37th ordinary session on 17 - 18 February. While providing an update on the conduct and outcome of the election, this policy brief also highlights some of the dynamics that transpired during the election as well as priorities for the new PSC.

THE CANDIDATES

Fourteen (14) member states submitted their candidature by the deadline of 30 October 2023 (and 13 November for the East Africa Region) to compete for the ten (10) seats in the Council. The list of candidates was accordingly prepared on the basis of this submission. Three (3) of the candidates were running for re-election into the PSC and of these candidates, two (2) were from East Africa and the other from West Africa. The candidate from West Africa standing for reelection entered the election with clean slate and hence with little doubt of returning to the PSC.

As captured in our previous policy brief on the [2024 Elections of the Members of the African Union Peace and Security Council: Overview of the Process and Candidates](#), Central Africa, Southern Africa and West Africa fielded equal number of candidates with the available seats allotted for the regions. In this context, Central Africa, North Africa and Southern Africa didn't have candidates running for reelection.

Unlike Central, Southern and West Africa regions, the other two regions (East and North) fielded a higher number of candidates than the number of seats available for the region. North Africa had three candidates for the one seat available for the region. On the other hand, East Africa presented two (2)

more candidates than the two (2) seats allocated to the region. Ahead of the election and following the agreement of North Africa to designate Mauritania as the incoming chairperson of the Union, Mauritania notified the countries of the region its withdrawal from the election for the PSC. Negotiations between Algeria and Egypt also made it clear that only one of them would stand as candidate during the election. By contrast, all four candidates for East Africa were on the list for election on voting day.

THE ELECTION PROCESS

The election of PSC members is regulated by the PSC Protocol and the 'modalities for the election of members of the Peace and Security Council'.[1] Accordingly, the Executive Council elects PSC members by secret ballot and candidates shall receive a two-third (2/3) majority vote among member states eligible to vote pursuant to the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Council. When the number of candidates submitted are equal to the seats allocated to the region, the balloting continues until each candidate meets the required threshold for membership. In the event that the candidate is not able to get the 2/3 majority at the third balloting, then the election shall be suspended to allow member states of the concerned region to engage in consultation. In a situation where there are more candidates than the allocated seats, the candidate with fewer votes shall withdraw after three rounds while the rest proceed to the next rounds of voting. However, if the candidate fails to garner the 2/3 majority vote balloting, the election will be suspended for consultation.

1   *Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. (July 2002). https://au.int/sites/default/f   iles/treaties/37293-treaty-0024_-_protocol_relating_to_the_establishment_of_the_peace_and_security_council_of_the_african_union_e.pdf*

MAP 1: AU MEMBER STATES PRESENTED AS CANDIDATES AHEAD OF THE ELECTION

MAP 2: MEMBERS ELECTED FOR THE TWO-YEAR TERM

CONDUCT AND OUTCOME OF THE ELECTION

The conduct of the election followed the regional allocation of the seats of the PSC. According to the Modalities for the Election of Members of the PSC, the regional representation of the 10 members of the PSC is organized based on the five regions of the AU with the following distribution of the seats: Central (2), East (2), North (1), South (2) and West (3).

As anticipated in our pre-election analysis, Egypt emerged as the only one candidate for the election for the single seat allocated to North Africa. For East Africa, as at the start of the convening of the election, all four countries from the region were on the list of candidates. However, before the conduct of the election proceeded, Ethiopia and Eritrea announced the withdrawal of their candidacy. This came after consultation on the spot before the start of the election.

Of the 14 candidates, 3 (The Gambia, Tanzania and Uganda) were previously elected to the PSC. The Gambia has previously served at the PSC for 6 years while Tanzania and Uganda have served at the PSC for 6 and 11 years respectively.

The first election following the English alphabetical order was for the two seats for the Central Africa Region. Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Equatorial Guinea were the two candidates standing for election on a clean slate. Both candidates garnered the required number of two-thirds majority vote in the very first round of balloting. Consequently, the DRC got elected with 42 votes out of the 47 and Equatorial Guinea got 43 votes.

It was the first time that the DRC ran for the election for PSC membership. As the only candidate that never served in the PSC previously, DRC's election into the PSC increased the number of States Parties to the PSC that served in the PSC to 43.

In the next election for East Africa, after Eritrea and Ethiopia were removed from the list of candidates, the voting was for Tanzania and Uganda to get the required two-thirds majority vote for them to renew their membership for the two seats in the East Africa region. Unlike the election for the Central Africa region, there were two rounds. As it became apparent later, this was on account of some technical glitch in the electoral process. The first round led to the delivery of the required two-third majority only for Tanzania, with 40 votes and the remaining 7 votes seemingly dispersed between Uganda and abstention, indicating the fact that, instead of voting for two candidates, member states voted only for one. Accordingly, during the second round of votes, Uganda garnered the required majority with 42 votes. This means that the

East African region remains with the same member states for the two-year term as with the last election.

Next in the sequence was the North Africa region. As the region with only one candidate, this was a much more straight forward election with almost no possibility of the kind of technical glitch that arose for the election for the East Africa region. Thus, Egypt was elected at once with 44 votes and two abstentions. This marks the return of Egypt to the PSC after only two years of absence from the PSC.

For the Southern Africa region, the two candidates for the two-year term were Angola and Botswana. As they were running on a clean slate, the vote was for securing the required majority vote. Once again, the election for this region encountered the same glitch as the election for East Africa, with Angola receiving 46 votes and Botswana receiving no vote with one abstention during the first round of balloting. During the second round, Botswana got elected with 43 votes.

The last segment of the election was for the three seats for the West Africa region. In this election, the voting had only one round. The three candidates running with clean slate (Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone and The Gambia) got elected with each garnering 42, 40 and 38 votes respectively. The Gambia, whose mandate is renewed, is joined by Côte d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone for the two-year term in the PSC.

Ghana exited the PSC without having served as Chairperson of the PSC in 2023.

Country	Region
Tunisia	North Africa
Tanzania (re-elected)	East Africa
Uganda (re-elected)	East Africa
Burundi	Central Africa
Congo	Central Africa
The Gambia (re-elected)	West Africa
Ghana	West Africa
Senegal	West Africa
South Africa	Southern Africa
Zimbabwe	Southern Africa

TABLE 1: OUTGOING MEMBERS OF THE PSC

THE NEW MEMBERSHIP OF THE PSC AND POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS

It is for the first time in a long while that the elections for the PSC for all the regions were on a clean slate. Even East Africa, which is least known for fielding the same number of candidates as the number of seats, eventually opted to avoid contesting against each other.

The new composition of the PSC shows that only three of the ten members of the newly reconstituted PSC that will start on 1 April 2024 are re-elected members of the PSC. Seven are newly elected members of which, DRC never served in the PSC. The re-election of Tanzania, The Gambia and Uganda to the PSC together with the five three-year term members of the PSC, means that there will be more continuity than change in the PSC.
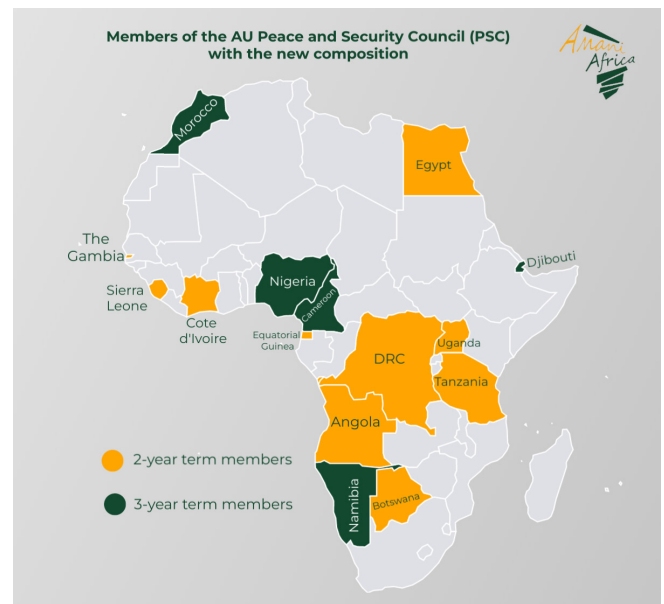
MAP 3: NEW COMPOSITION OF THE PSC AS OF 1 APRIL 2024

Despite the fact that eight of the 15 members of the PSC will be the same as those in the PSC for the past two years, the reconfiguration of the PSC through the introduction of new members will not be without consequences. First, as the first timer to the PSC, it will take a bit of time for the DRC to get the hang of how the PSC functions and effectively engage in the PSC processes. Second, from the newly elected members returning to the PSC after some years of absence, previous tenure shows that countries such as Egypt are anticipated to wield influence, particularly on some aspects of the work of the PSC including issues such

as climate and peace and security and post-conflict reconstruction and development and PSC working methods.

SEIZING THE NEW COMPOSITION OF THE PSC FOR CHANGING COURSE FOR AVOIDING RISK OF IRRELEVANCE

It is worth noting that, as in the past elections, the requirements listed under Article 5(2) of the PSC Protocol that call for compliance with standards of democracy, constitutional rule as well as respect for human rights never counted both for candidacy and voting. Of further concern is the effectiveness of the PSC membership and its functioning. This is due to the fact that the prerequisites for contributing to the promotion and maintenance of peace and security in Africa and having adequately staffed and equipped Permanent Missions at the AU and UN Headquarters, were not considered significant for membership responsibilities. Despite the PSC's repeated emphasis on the need for compliance during its retreats, there is still no mechanism in place to enforce Article 5(2).

Without such a mechanism presenting assessment of the candidates, it would also be difficult to imagine the possibility for the operationalization of Article 5(3) which stipulates that there 'shall be a periodic review by the Assembly to assess the extent to which the members of the PSC continue to meet the requirements spelt out in Article 5(2) and to take action as appropriate.'[2] Beyond and above working methods issues, this should have been an area that deserved attention as far as the reform of the PSC in the context of the institutional reform of the PSC.

With the PSC marking the 20th anniversary of its operationalization and official launch in 2024, it is auspicious for not only taking stock of the two decades journey of the PSC but also for change of course in the way it functions. As we highlighted in our review of the

PSC in 2023, this premier peace and security decision-making body ill affords to continue in a business-as-usual fashion in the face of the extraordinary, major and inspecting challenges to peace and security in Africa. Indeed, such change of course is both a strategic imperative and existential necessity if the PSC is going to survive as the leading hub for continental peace and security decision-making. The PSC should use its new membership and composition as an opportunity to engage in strategic review for achieving the change that positions it to deliver more meaningfully on its mandate in the current realities of Africa and the world.

2   Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. (July 2002). https://au.int/sites/default/f   iles/treaties/37293-treaty-0024_-_protocol_relating_to_the_establishment_of_the_peace_and_security_council_of_the_african_union_e.pdf

Africa_amani
www.amaniafrica-et.org

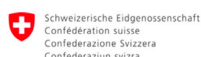**MEDIA AND RESEARCH SERVICES**

ABOUT AMANI AFRICA

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

We support the pan-African dream of peaceful, prosperous and integrated Africa through research, training, strategic communications, technical advisory services, and convening and facilitation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Ambasáid na hÉireann
Embassy of Ireland

Norwegian Ministry
of Foreign Affairs

OPEN SOCIETY
FOUNDATIONS

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