

# MONTHLY DIGEST ON THE AFRICAN UNION PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL

## AMANI AFRICA

Media and Research Services

February, 2025

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## THE MONTH AT A GLANCE

In February 2025, the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC), chaired by Equatorial Guinea, convened two of the sessions anticipated in the [Provisional Programme of Work](#) and held a third session on a theme added during the month. The sessions were held at two levels: ambassadorial and summit levels. With the addition of another conflict situation to the summit level session initially envisaged to deal with only one country-specific situation and another theme dedicated to consideration of the outcome of the Oran Seminar, the PSC addressed four agenda items in the three sessions it held during the month.

The Provisional Programme of Work underwent two<sup>1</sup> revisions during the course of the month. The first revision added a new agenda titled 'Consideration of the Situation in the Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo', to the summit level session initially envisaged to deal with 'Consideration of the Situation in Sudan'. The ministerial session on maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea scheduled for 4 February was also indefinitely postponed. Instead, the PSC held another session on 5 February for the 'Consideration of the Conclusions of the 11th High-Level Seminar on Peace and Security in Africa', which followed the seminar held in Oran, Algeria from 1 to 2 December 2024.

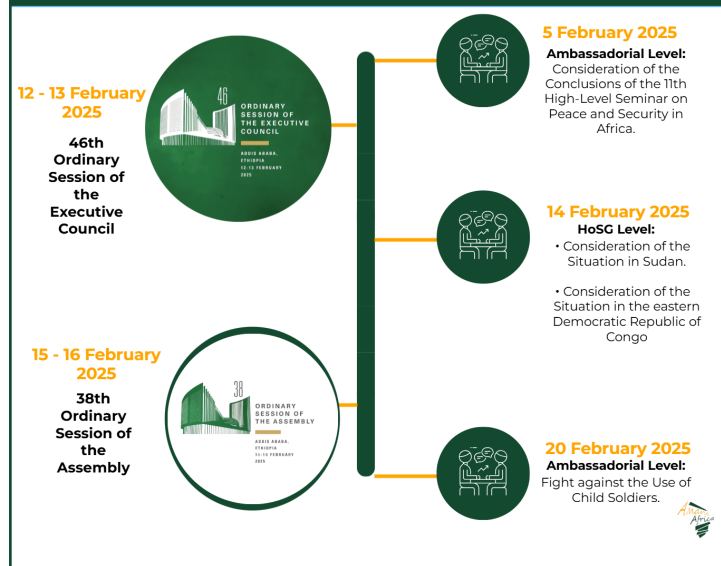
The four outcomes of the sessions were adopted as communiqué. On average, it took approximately 3 days for the published outcome documents to be released.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Other changes include the revision that saw the Consideration and Adoption of the Monthly Provisional Programme of Work for March 2025 was rescheduled from 18 February to 24 February, reflecting adjustments in the Council's procedural timeline.

<sup>2</sup> This calculation excludes the outcome of the session on Fight against the Use of Child Soldiers.

### Activities of the AU Peace and Security Council and its Subsidiary Bodies

February 2025



## THE PSC ENDORSED THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE 11<sup>TH</sup> HIGH-LEVEL SEMINAR ON PEACE AND SECURITY, EMPHASISING THE NEED FOR STRENGTHENING AFRICA'S VOICE IN GLOBAL SECURITY

The 1259<sup>th</sup> session of the PSC held on 5 February 2025, was dedicated to considering the [Conclusions](#) of the 11<sup>th</sup> High-Level Seminar on Peace and Security in Africa, which took place in Oran, Algeria, from 1 to 2 December 2024. During the session, the PSC reviewed the outcomes of the seminar, held annually since 2013, as a platform to enhance the coordination between the PSC and the African Members of the UNSC (A3).

The 11<sup>th</sup> High-Level Seminar focused on key thematic areas, including counterterrorism, UN Security Council reform, [UNSC Resolution 2719](#) (2023) and the coordination between the PSC and the A3. Notably, the Seminar coincided with the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the African Union Counter-Terrorism Center,

offering a timely opportunity to assess progress and challenges in advancing peace and security across the continent. The discussions underscored the importance of integrated approaches that combine military and socio-economic strategies, alongside the need for early detection, prevention, and rapid response.

However, the conclusions largely focus on security-centric approaches to addressing peace and security challenges, such as enhancing national defense capabilities and strengthening regional intelligence cooperation. While these measures are important, they do not sufficiently address the role of non-state actors, civil society, and local communities in addressing what our [special research report](#) called 'the socio-economic and political governance pathologies' that created the space for the emergence and expansion of terrorist activities.

Additionally, the seminar's conclusions on the Pact for the Future also highlighted the importance of strengthening Africa's voice in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and reforming the UNSC to make it more representative and inclusive. The seminar's conclusions on the UNSC reform reiterate the long-standing African position, as outlined in the [Ezulwini Consensus](#) and the [Sirte Declaration](#), which call for two permanent seats for Africa with full powers and privileges. It further emphasized the urgent need to democratize the penholder system in favor of the A3plus, particularly concerning African-related files. The emphasis on making the UNSC more representative, inclusive, and democratic is a critical issue for Africa, given the continent's underrepresentation in global decision-making as comprehensively captured in the [Report of the Joint Namibia-Amani Africa High-Level Panel of Experts on Africa and the Reform of the Multilateral System](#).

Regarding the implementation of UNSC Resolution 2719, the seminar underscored the critical need for predictable funding for AU-led peace support operations, particularly in light of the transition from the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) to the African Union Support and Stabilization Mission in Somalia (AUSSOM). The call for sustained international support is especially significant given the financial constraints faced by the AU. Recognizing the challenges AUSSOM inherited from its predecessor, the seminar stressed the importance of avoiding the pitfalls that hindered ATMIS and AMISOM.

Recommendations were made in the closed segment of the Seminar that discussed the coordination between the PSC and the African Members of the UNSC Plus (A3 Plus). Some of the key recommendations include:

- Synchronization of the meetings of the PSC and those of the UNSC on matters relating to peace, security and stability in Africa, which come under the joint mandate of the two Councils, so as to ensure proper guidance to the A3 Plus;
- Need for ensuring continued push for the A3 to take effective pen-holders or co-pen-holding on African files on the UNSC Agenda, which come under the joint jurisdiction of the two Councils; and
- Need for the A3 Plus 1 to brief the PSC on a quarterly basis, or at any other time when the need arises, on African issues on the Agenda of the UNSC and which come under the joint mandate of the two Councils, for the purposes of information sharing and necessary guidance.

Having considered the outcomes of the 11<sup>th</sup> High-Level Seminar, the 1159<sup>th</sup> session of the PSC adopted a [Communiqué](#). The key element of the communiqué is the adoption of the conclusions of the 11<sup>th</sup> High-Level Seminar.

### Key actionable decision requiring follow-up

- Requested the AU Commission, to take all necessary steps to facilitate the effective implementation of the outcomes of the 11<sup>th</sup> High-Level Seminar on Peace and Security in Africa.

## PSC SUMMIT ON SUDAN ADOPTED NO MAJOR ACTIONABLE MEASURE

On 14 February, the PSC convened its 1261<sup>st</sup> session at the level of Heads of State and Government on the margins of the 38<sup>th</sup> AU Summit to consider the situation in Sudan.<sup>3</sup>



Figure 1: The PSC's 1261st session on the situation on Sudan, 14 February 2025 (Source: @AU\_PAPS)

<sup>3</sup> Equatorial Guinea's President, Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, presided over the session as the PSC chair for February. AU Commission Chairperson Moussa Faki Mahamat briefed the Council, while statements were also delivered by Mahmoud Ali Youssouf, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, representing Djibouti's President Ismail Omar Guelleh in his capacity as chair of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres, and a representative of the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States.

The [communiqué](#) adopted at the session does not introduce major new elements, except for its call on the Sudanese warring parties to observe a humanitarian truce during the holy month of Ramadan, starting in March 2025. Last March, the Chairperson of the AU Commission [urged](#) the parties to 'observe a total ceasefire across the whole national territory throughout the holy month of Ramadan,' but the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) leader rejected the truce, conditioning it on the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) withdrawing from civilian sites. All indications suggest that both parties are unlikely to heed this call again this year, as Ramadan begun on 1 March 2025.

Beyond this, the communiqué largely reiterates previous pronouncements, often without addressing how to operationalize and move them forward. There is also a lack of follow-up on key previous decisions, as their omission from the communiqué suggests, though it remains unclear whether this omission reflects an abandonment of these decisions or merely a lack of progress in their implementation. The session also represents a missed opportunity for the Council to provide strategic guidance on recalibrating the AU's approach to addressing the crisis, particularly given that the session was held at the level of heads of state and government.

For instance, while the PSC expresses 'deep concern' over the continued escalation of the conflict, particularly the 'non-stop perpetration of war crimes and crimes against humanity, [and] other grave violations of human rights,' it does not specify how accountability measures will be operationalized, beyond warning perpetrators that 'they will be held accountable for their deplorable actions.' Similarly, on civilian protection, the communiqué highlights its importance but does not set out actionable steps to ensure

it. Notably, the communiqué omits two significant decisions made during PSC's [1213th](#) and [1218th](#) sessions—mandating the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR), in collaboration with the AU Commission, to investigate human rights violations and tasking the AU High-Level Panel on Sudan to develop a plan for civilian protection.

As part of the efforts to implement the decisions of the PSC's 1213<sup>th</sup> and 1218<sup>th</sup> sessions, the ACHPR has [established](#) a Joint Fact-Finding Mission, which has called for the submission of reports on human rights violations occurring from the start of hostilities. However, progress toward preparing a plan for the protection of civilians by the AU High-Level Panel on Sudan remains unclear. In this regard, our '[Insights on the PSC](#)' prepared for the session emphasized the urgency of operationalizing PSC decisions on civilian protection, highlighting the need for the PSC to facilitate the effective functioning of the Special Envoy on the Prevention of Genocide and other Atrocities by tasking him with monitoring and reporting on civilian protection challenges to identify ways to mitigate them.

Another major issue where the PSC failed to follow through is the identification of external actors supporting the warring factions. It is to be recalled that during its 1218<sup>th</sup> session, held on 21 June 2024 at the level of Heads of State and Government, the PSC directed its Sub-Committee on Sanctions, in collaboration with the Committee of Intelligence and Security Services of Africa (CISSA), to identify all external actors supporting the warring factions militarily, financially, and politically, and to propose measures for containing them within three months. Although the report was due in September 2024, the Council has yet to receive the proposals.

As noted in the edition of *Insights on the PSC* dedicated to this agenda of the session, one factor hindering the delivery of this mandate is the sensitivity of the matter and the political constraints faced by the AU Commission and CISSA. While the PSC could have seized the opportunity to discuss how to address this challenge and take concrete steps to contain external interference—which is significantly complicating the resolution of the conflict—the communiqué adopted at the 1261<sup>st</sup> session merely reiterates its condemnation of all forms of external interference and appeals to these actors to halt their support for the warring parties. One potential strategy to address this issue, as proposed in the edition of *Insights on the PSC* dedicated to this agenda of the session, could have been the establishment of a high-level task force, headed by a credible former head of state, tasked with investigating, documenting, and reporting the sources and channels of supply to the Council.

### Relevant previous PSC decisions:

- 1213<sup>th</sup> Session: [[PSC/PR/BR.1213 \(2024\)](#)]: PSC requested:
  - The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights to urgently investigate the human rights situation in El Fasher and other areas in Darfur and to report back to Council, including recommendations to hold perpetrators accountable.
  - The AU High-Level Panel to work with the newly-appointed AU Special Envoy for the Prevention of Genocide, to develop proposals on how to address ongoing atrocities and to prevent further escalation in Darfur, as well as to develop a plan for the protection of civilians.
- 1218<sup>th</sup> Session: [[PSC/HoSG/COMM.1218 \(2024\)](#)]: PSC:
  - Mandated the African Union and its relevant Organs, in collaboration with the High-Level Panel on Sudan and IGAD, to regularly monitor and

report heinous crimes committed throughout Sudan, develop proposals on how to address them to prevent their further escalation, as well as develop a plan for the protection of civilians.

- Directed the Chairperson of the AU Commission to urgently set up a PSC Ad-hoc Presidential Committee comprising one Head of State and Government from each region of the Continent and led by H.E. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda, and Chairperson of the PSC for June 2024, to facilitate face-to-face engagements between the leaders of the SAF and the RSF, at the shortest possible time.
- Directed the PSC Sub-Committee on Sanctions to liaise with the AU Commission and CISSA to identify all external actors supporting the warring factions militarily, financially and politically, as well as make proposals on how to contain each of them within a stipulated timeframe not exceeding three (3) months from June 2024.
- Requested the AU Commission, in coordination with the ACHPR, to investigate and make recommendations to the PSC on practical measures to be undertaken for the protection of civilians.
- Proposed the convening of an extraordinary summit of the AU to consider the situation in Sudan.
- Requested the AU Commission, in consultation with the Chairperson of the Union, to consult on the date and venue of the aforementioned extraordinary summit.

Despite the lack of progress in the convening of the committee, the PSC welcomed the 'progress made in the operationalization of the PSC Ad Hoc Presidential Committee on Sudan.' The Committee comprises the Heads of State and Government of Uganda (Chair), Angola, Equatorial Guinea, Egypt, and Nigeria, representing the five regions. Despite its establishment, the Committee has remained paralyzed, as some of its members have either been rejected by one of the parties or are perceived as partisan in the ongoing conflict. While reconstitution is necessary due to its stalled operation and credibility concerns, the PSC once again failed to outline a way forward on how to activate the Committee for it to play its role of bringing the weight of AU member states from all regions to bear on the search for achieving cessation of hostilities and resolution of the conflict.

Meanwhile, the PSC reiterated its roadmap for resolving the conflict—which includes establishing an immediate, permanent, and unconditional ceasefire, returning to negotiations, and subsequently launching an inclusive national dialogue and political transition. On the political dialogue, the PSC requested the AU Commission, through the High-Level Panel and in coordination with IGAD and neighboring countries, to continue engaging civilian actors toward an inclusive inter-Sudanese process.<sup>4</sup> The High-Level Panel had previously convened two preparatory meetings for the Inter-Sudanese Political Dialogue in July and August 2024. It held another dialogue the week after the AU summit.

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<sup>4</sup> Following the session, from 19 to 21 February 2025, Sudanese civilian political groups gathered at the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa under the auspices of the AU High-Level Panel on Sudan and the IGAD Special Envoy to Sudan to discuss the path forward for an inclusive Inter-Sudanese Political Dialogue.

## Key actionable decisions requiring follow-up

The PSC:

- Requested the AU Commission, through the High-Level Panel on Sudan, and in close coordination with the IGAD, as well as neighbouring countries to continue engaging civilian actors towards an inclusive inter-Sudanese process; and
- Urged the warring parties to observe a humanitarian truce during the holy month of Ramadan, and ensure safe and unhindered humanitarian access to the population in need.

## PSC SIGNALS THE CONTINUING IMPORTANCE OF THE LUANDA PROCESS DESPITE EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE PROPOSAL TO MERGE IT WITH THE NAIROBI PROCESS

On 14 February 2025, the PSC held its 1261<sup>st</sup> meeting at the Heads of State and Government level to address the situation in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> *Sudanese civilian political groups gathered at the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa under the auspices of the AU High-Level Panel on Sudan and the IGAD Special Envoy to Sudan to discuss the path forward for an inclusive Inter-Sudanese Political Dialogue.*

*The meeting featured introductory remarks by H.E. Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, President of Equatorial Guinea and Chairperson of the AU PSC for February 2025, followed by a briefing from H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the AU Commission. Statements were delivered by H.E. Félix Tshisekedi, President of the DRC (represented by H.E. Judith Suminwa Tuluka, Prime Minister and Chief of Government of the DRC), H.E. Paul Kagame, President of Rwanda, H.E. João Lourenço, President of Angola and Mediator of the Luanda Process, Chair of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), and AU Champion for Peace and Reconciliation, H.E. Samia Suluhu*



Figure 2: Speakers at the 1261st Session of the PSC (Source X: @AUC\_PAPS)

The meeting was not initially included in the Provisional Programme of Work. It is prompted by rapidly unfolding developments that necessitated urgent attention beyond the originally planned agenda. It is recalled that the urgency of the situation was highlighted by the [1256<sup>th</sup>](#) Emergency Ministerial Meeting, held on 28 January 2025 which expressed deep concern over the activities of M23 and proposed a high-level summit on the margins of the AU Assembly in February 2025. The fall of Goma and subsequent M23 advances into South Kivu, coupled with the inability of regional forces such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Mission in the DRC (SAMIDRC) and the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) to halt the offensive,

*Hassan, President of Tanzania and Chair of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence, and Security Cooperation (OPDS), H.E. Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa, President of Zimbabwe and Chair of SADC, H.E. William Ruto, President of Kenya and Chair of the East African Community (EAC), and H.E. António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General.*

were likely key factors that prompted the decision to convene the summit level session on eastern DRC.

The [communiqué](#) as anticipated, expressed ‘grave concern’ over the worsening security and humanitarian crisis in eastern DRC, emphasizing the need for a coordinated response under the principle of ‘African Solutions to African Problems.’ While the communiqué further reiterates respect for the DRC’s sovereignty and territorial integrity, it lacks concrete mechanisms or strategies for enforcement. The lack of specific measures raises concerns that the Council’s calls may remain symbolic rather than actionable.

Similarly, beyond a broad call for ‘unhindered and safe humanitarian accesses and civilian protection,’ the meeting failed to outline concrete targets or timelines for aid delivery and security measures. It also lacked specific AU-led humanitarian initiatives or resource mobilization efforts, a critical omission given the scale of the crisis. With [over 7 million](#) people displaced and worsening conditions due to disease outbreaks—including Mpox—and food insecurity, a more structured coordination framework with UN agencies and regional organizations could have enhanced the effectiveness and urgency of the humanitarian response.

Echoing the outcome of the ministerial session of 28 January, the communiqué urged an immediate and unconditional ceasefire, an end to hostilities, and the withdrawal of all ‘uninvited foreign forces’ and armed groups from the DRC. It is believed that the use of ‘uninvited foreign forces’ is a [euphemism](#) for Rwanda.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> [UN reports](#) have documented allegations of Rwanda’s support for M23 and Uganda’s historical involvement as a component of a mutual agreement with the government of Congo, but diplomatic caution often avoids direct attributions to maintain regional stability.

The other point that the communiqué makes only as a passing reference is accountability reaffirming that attacks on civilians and peacekeeping personnel constitute ‘war crimes’ and warned that ‘perpetrators will be held accountable.’

### Relevant previous PSC decisions:

- 1222<sup>nd</sup> Session: [PSC/MIN/COMM.1222 \(2024\)](#): PSC requested:
  - The AU Commission, working in close collaboration with the Mediator of the Luanda Process and the Facilitator of the Nairobi Process, to rollout practical modalities for enhanced coordination and harmonization, involving the Panel of the Wise and Femwise as subsidiary and complementary efforts, with the support of the AU Mediation and Dialogue Division, and to submit regular progress reports on both processes to the Council.
  - The AU Commission to accelerate the implementation of the recommendations in the Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.1203 \(2024\)](#) of 4 March 2024 to enable the SAMIDRC to complete its deployment.
- 1256<sup>th</sup> Session: [PSC/MIN/COMM.1256 \(2025\)](#): PSC:
  - Requested the UN and the AU Commission to continue to provide support to the SAMIDRC;
  - Mandated the AU Commission to immediately deploy a fact-finding mission on the ongoing crisis in eastern DRC within the context of the quadripartite framework and report back to the Council soonest; and
  - Proposed the holding of the PSC Meeting on the situation in eastern DRC at Heads of State and Government level, on the margins of the upcoming AU Assembly in February 2025.

The communiqué references past PSC resolutions, including those from sessions 1256<sup>th</sup>, [1140<sup>th</sup>](#), 1203<sup>rd</sup>, and 1222<sup>nd</sup>, reaffirming established principles such as national sovereignty and the necessity of a ceasefire. However, it does not address why these prior declarations have been ineffective in curbing the conflict's intensification, particularly in light of M23's seizure of Goma in early 2025.

The meeting notably supported the proposal to merge the Luanda and Nairobi Processes, as recommended by the 'Joint EAC-SADC Summit,' aiming to improve coordination, harmonization, and complementarity. It also formally endorsed the communiqués from the Joint EAC-SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government ([8 February 2025](#), Dar es Salaam), the Extraordinary SADC Summit ([31 January 2025](#)), and the 24th Extraordinary EAC Summit ([29 January 2025](#)), all of which addressed the worsening crisis in eastern DRC. While this move signals progress toward streamlining peace efforts, it lacks clarity on how the merger will be implemented, who will oversee it, and how jurisdictional overlaps between the EAC and the SADC will be resolved. Without addressing these structural ambiguities, the risk remains that peace initiatives will remain fragmented rather than effectively unified.

In this respect, it is worth noting that the PSC despite expressing support for the merger of Luanda and Nairobi processes highlighted the importance of safeguarding the progress made under the Luanda process. It thus urged the parties 'to take advantage of the progress made in the Luanda process, namely, the implementation of the Concept of Operations (CONOPs) of the Harmonized Plan for Neutralization of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDRL), and disengagement of forces from the DRC/ the lifting of Rwanda's defensive measures

as agreed in the Luanda Process, as well as strengthening the cooperation under the framework of the Enhanced Ad-hoc Verification Mechanism. Indicating the continuing significance of the Luanda process despite the call for its merger with the Nairobi process, the PSC also urged DRC and Rwanda 'to return to the Luanda process.'

Lastly, the Council paid tribute to the personnel of the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC), SAMIDRC, and MONUSCO, offering condolences to the families and governments of peacekeepers from South Africa, Malawi, Tanzania, and Uruguay, and expressed sympathies to the Government and people of the DRC for the loss of North Kivu's Interim Military Governor. Aside from recognizing the bravery of the FARDC, SAMIDRC, and MONUSCO, the communiqué did not provide clarity on how the mission can sustain its operations. As highlighted in our [Insight on the PSC](#) prepared for the session, beyond the tragic loss of peacekeepers, the very viability of these missions has become a pressing concern. With troop-contributing countries of SAMIDRC announcing their withdrawal, the mission now exists largely in a name. In practical terms, M23's territorial advances have significantly undermined SAMIDRC's stability. Likewise, it remains uncertain whether and how MONUSCO can effectively fulfil its mandate given the shifting realities on the ground.

### Key actionable decisions requiring follow-up

To enhance coordination and effectiveness, the AU PSC requested the AU Commission, EAC, and SADC Secretariats to:

- Develop a framework to strengthen coordination and complementarity between the Luanda and Nairobi Processes, ensuring a more integrated and ef-

fective peace process;

- Establish a Joint AU/EAC/SADC Coordination Mechanism to provide technical support, facilitate collaboration with other relevant regional economic communities and mechanisms (ECCAS and ICGLR), and harmonize efforts; and
- Create sustainable funding mechanisms to support AU/EAC/SADC peace initiatives in eastern DRC, including the establishment of regular reporting mechanisms to ensure effective decision-making and accountability.

## ACERWC ASKED TO EXPEDITE THE FINALIZATION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE STUDY ON CHILD SOLDIERS IN AFRICA FOR PRESENTATION TO THE POLICY ORGANS

On 20 February, PSC convened for its 1262<sup>nd</sup> session on the 'Fight Against the Use of Child Soldiers in Africa.'

PSC 'condemned the recruitment and use of children in armed conflicts by both armed forces and armed groups across the continent, as it constitutes a gross violation of human rights, child rights and international humanitarian law. The Council underscored the need for 'all security forces and armed groups to fully observe and comply with their obligations in the 1949 Geneva Conventions on International Humanitarian Law; and International Human Rights law.' Subsequently, it urged Member States, Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs) 'to strengthen accountability mechanisms' and take decisive legal and punitive measures against perpetrators of child recruitment and exploitation.

We can recall that from the [Banjul Conclusions](#) adopted after the ministerial, high-level open session on the 'Promotion and Protection of the Rights and Welfare of Children in Situations of Conflict in Africa' held in December 2023, participants agreed on the imperative to 'develop a Continental Child Justice Framework addressing both punitive measures and a recourse and restitution elements for child survivors.'

Regarding the imperative of addressing the root causes of child recruitment and use in armed conflicts, the PSC underscored 'the need for governments and stakeholders to redouble efforts investing in education, economic opportunities, food security and conflict prevention measures to address [t]hese root causes,' which include, but not limited to, poverty, political instability and inequality.

On the AU Commission's role, the Council underscored the need for the AU Commission to 'mainstream child protection into AU institutional responses and ensure child protection in AU-mandated, authorized or endorsed Peace Support Operations; both towards preventing violations against children in armed conflict and in promoting accountability in mission areas.'

In addition, it reiterated 'the important role of Member States, AU Commission and RECs/RMs, in integrating child protection into mediation efforts and in implementing child-focused reintegration strategies in post-conflict settings such as in Post-Conflict, Reconstruction and Development (PCRD), Security Sector Reform (SSR) and Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) programmes.' Relatedly, it called on the involved stakeholders to 'prioritize the provision of essential services such as education, healthcare, psychosocial support and social care, while designing tailored reintegration

programmes, to restore the dignity and rights of children recruited and exploited in armed conflicts.’



Figure 3: 1262nd Session of the PSC  
(Source X: @AUC\_PAPS)

The Council further reiterated the implementation of [Safe Schools Declaration](#) as mentioned in other previous PSC sessions on ‘[children affected by armed conflicts](#)’. Consequently, it encouraged Member States who have not yet done so, to ratify and domesticate the [African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child](#) and other international instruments for the protection of Children, including the [Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict](#). Funding issue was also part of the discussion, as Council appealed to all Member States, the AU Commission and the wider international community ‘to provide and allocate substantial funding for child-focused and gender-sensitive programmes that address the specific needs of children in conflict and post-conflict settings.’

### Relevant previous PSC decisions:

- 1202<sup>nd</sup> session [[PSC/PR/COMM.1202 \(2024\)](#)]: emphasising the imperative of developing a child-sensitive social protection framework for children in conflict settings to address the underlying causes of vulnerability, the PSC requested the AU Commission, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, to develop a Continental Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Framework

to address the psychosocial wellbeing of children in conflict settings, including those formerly associated with armed forces and armed groups.

- 1110<sup>th</sup> session [[PSC/PR/COMM.1110 \(2022\)](#)]: noting the growing use of children by terrorist groups, the PSC requested the AU Commission to ‘undertake a study on the specific impact of terrorism on children and to submit the report of the study for consideration by the Council, as soon as possible.’
- 1101<sup>st</sup> Session [[PSC/PR/COMM.1101 \(2022\)](#)]: requested the AU Commission, to urgently develop guidelines for the participation of children in PSC sessions to ensure systematic engagements.

Despite these pronouncements, Council missed the opportunity to follow up on its commitment from the 1202<sup>nd</sup> session in which it tasked the AU Commission to ‘operationalise the Child Protection Architecture as a convening platform which aims to trigger an integrated response to the multi-dimensional challenges faced by children in conflict situations.’ From the February 2024 session, we also saw the PSC tasking the Commission to ‘develop a best practice document of reference to prevent and end the recruitment and use of child soldiers by armed groups.’

### Key Actionable Decisions Requiring Follow-Up

- Need to integrate child protection considerations into national, regional and continental early warning systems;
- Reiterated its call, from its 1202<sup>nd</sup> session held in February 2024, for ‘the AU Commission, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, to expedite the development of a Continental Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Framework to address the psycho-

- social needs of children affected by armed conflict, including those formerly associated with armed groups’;
- AU Commission, in coordination with the relevant stakeholders, to enhance regular and continuous monitoring of the situation of children in conflict situations in Africa and promote a learning and knowledge generation platform that embodies the African reality of child protection;
  - ACERWC to expedite finalization of the comprehensive study on child soldiers in Africa for presentation to the Policy Organs for consideration as mandated by the Executive Council Decision [[EX.CL/Dec.1248\(XLIV\)](#)] adopted at the 44<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Executive Council, held on 14 and 15 February 2024, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; and
  - Chairperson of the AU Commission to appoint a Special Envoy for Children Affected by Armed Conflicts in Africa.

## OTHER ACTIVITIES OF THE PSC

Besides the substantive sessions, the PSC held sessions for reviewing the draft report on its activities and the state of peace and security and the report on the implementation of the Au roadmap on silencing the guns. Other activities included the meeting of the Committee of Experts (CoE). The CoE met to have an orientation workshop on the Continental Early Warning System on 25 February 2025.



## MEDIA AND RESEARCH SERVICES

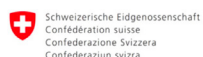
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We support the pan-African dream of peaceful, prosperous and integrated Africa through research, training, strategic communications, technical advisory services, and convening and facilitation.

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