

# MONTHLY DIGEST ON THE AFRICAN UNION PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL

## AMANI AFRICA

Media and Research Services

March 2024

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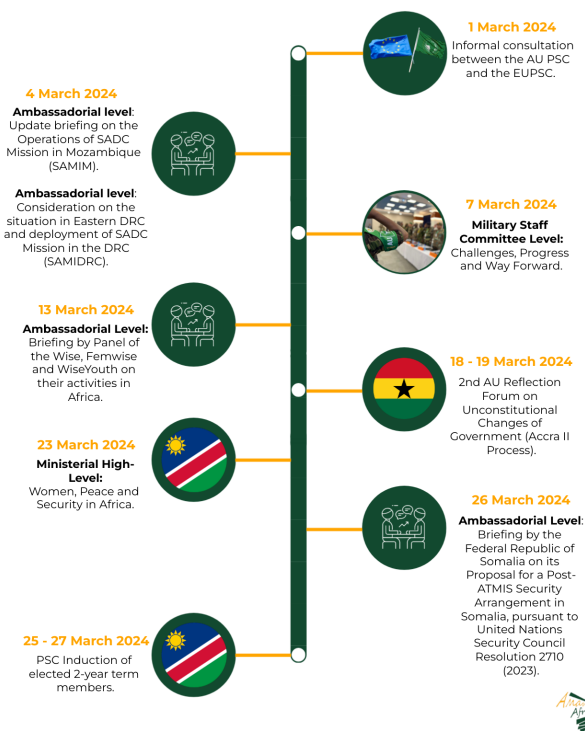
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## THE MONTH AT A GLANCE

In March, under the chairship of Namibia, the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC) had a [scheduled program of work](#) consisting of six sessions and an informal meeting. After the revision of the programme, four sessions and two informal consultations were held.

### Activities of the AU Peace and Security Council March 2024



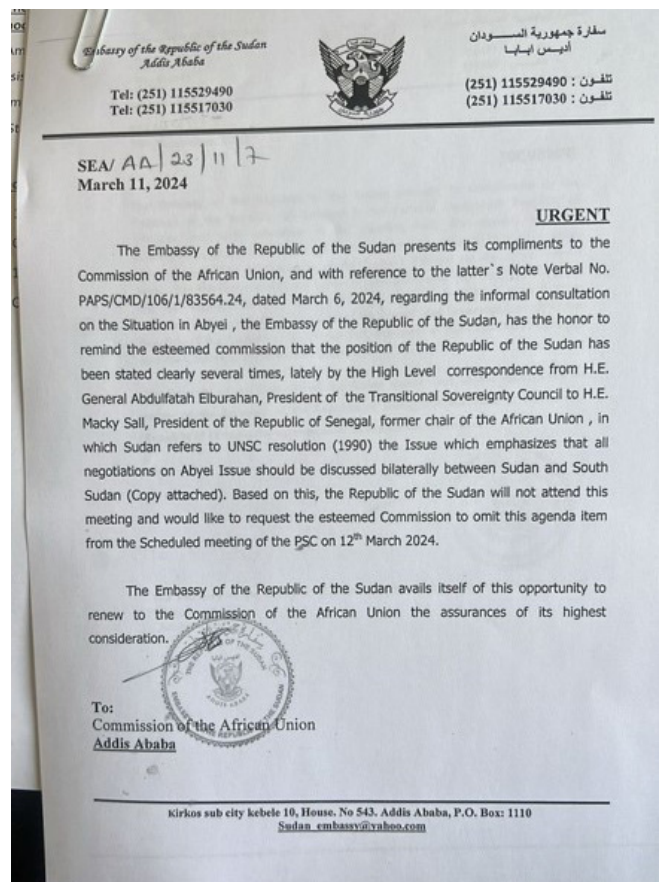
Out of the four sessions, two were focused on thematic issues, while two sessions addressed conflict-specific situations. Except for one session held at the ministerial level, all the other sessions, including the informal consultations were held at the level of permanent representatives.

Over the course of the month, the Provisional Programme of Work of the PSC underwent three revisions.<sup>1</sup> The first revision resulted in adding the informal consultation between the PSC and the European Union Political

<sup>1</sup> Besides the activities of the revising the PSC activities, the revision also rescheduled the Committee of Experts (CoE) meeting from 11 to 13 March and the UCG Forum in Accra from 14 – 16 to 18 & 19 March.

and Security Committee (EUPSC) for 1 March.

The first revision also indefinitely postponed the session scheduled for the informal consultation and briefing on the situation in Abyei for 12 March. The PSC’s scheduled meeting on the situation in Abyei was crucial, given the recent upsurge in the region’s security and humanitarian crises. However, the attempt by the PSC to canvas the views of the representative of Sudan on the situation in Abyei through informal consultation (as Sudan is suspended from participating in the activities of the AU) and the convening of the scheduled session could not be held on account of the reticence of Sudan, whose representative in Addis Ababa sent a letter requesting that the PSC does not proceed with its planned engagement on Abyei.



Sudan’s request came in response to a diplomatic note inviting them to join the informal consultation ahead of the PSC meeting.

Not only did Sudan decline the invitation to the consultation, but they also called for the removal of the Abyei issue from the PSC meeting's agenda. Considering the participation of Sudan in previous sessions of the PSC on Abyei, its invocation of a UNSC resolution for resolving the situation through bilateral engagement with South Sudan as an excuse is nothing but an act of diplomatic obstruction. While the role of Sudan regarding the situation of Abyei is important, the PSC's engagement should not be made contingent on Sudan's cooperation. The PSC, as the UNSC does, should continue to discharge its mandate in specific situations such as Abyei without allowing itself to be dictated by conflict parties.

**' The PSC, as the UNSC does, should continue to discharge its mandate in specific situations such as Abyei without allowing itself to dictate conflict parties. '**

This will be the second consecutive year the PSC has failed to hold a session on the situation in Abyei. The last time the PSC engaged on the matter was in 2022.

# 2022

The last time the PSC held a session on the situation in Abyei.

The ongoing deterioration in Abyei's security and humanitarian conditions is only likely to worsen without active engagement and adequate support for mechanisms such as the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone (SDBZ), the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism (JBVMM), and the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA). Without such constant diplomatic engagement, it will not be possible for the AU PSC to play

its own share of contributing to arresting the deteriorating situation that risks hampering the prospects for a peaceful resolution of the situation.

Lastly, the first revision rescheduled the Women Peace and Security (WPS) Session from 6 to 23 March and the session on the Panel of the Wise was moved from 19 to 13 March.

The second revision also postponed the session scheduled for the briefing on the situation in Somalia: Post ATMIS that was initially planned for 8 March 2024. Instead, following a request from Somalia the PSC in the third and the last revision added an informal consultation for a briefing by the Federal Government of Somalia on its proposal for a Post-ATMIS arrangement in Somalia for 27 March.

While the outcomes of the three sessions were adopted as Communiqué, the outcome of the session on the WPS outcome document was adopted as conclusions. On average, it took 8 days for the published outcome documents to be released.<sup>2</sup>

## INFORMAL CONSULTATION: THE PSC AND THE EUROPEAN UNION POLITICAL AND SECURITY COMMITTEE SEEKING TO PATCH UP CHALLENGES OF RECENT YEARS

On 1 March, the PSC conducted an informal consultation with the European Union Political and Security committee (EUPSC). This collaborative meeting was scheduled at the request of the EUPSC to coincide with the EUPSC members' mission to Addis and

<sup>2</sup> This calculation excludes the outcome of the session on Peace, security and development nexus: follow-up to the Tangier's Conference.

use their presence for discussing working methods issues in the annual consultative meeting between the two bodies. This focus is primarily necessitated by the lack of agreed upon outcome documents for the past two Annual Consultative Meetings of the EUPSC and AUPSC. Considering that the main source of the lack of joint communique of the past two consultative meetings was the divergence between the two on the inclusion of reference to the war in Ukraine particularly with language expressing some form of condemnation of Russia's military assault on Ukraine. It remains to be seen whether this same issue will arise in the next consultative meeting and if there is any consensus on the inclusion of any reference to the situation.



Informal Consultations between the PSC and EUPSC  
Source: @AUC\_PAPS

The discussion additionally encompassed exchanges on topics such as conflict prevention, mediation, and post-conflict strategies in Africa, as well as funding strategies for Peace Support Operations.

## PSC REQUESTS NEEDS ASSESMENT TO SUPPORT MOZAMBIQUE AS IT TOOK NOTE OF SADC'S DECISION TO WITHDRAWAL OF SAMIM

The 1203<sup>rd</sup> session of the PSC that was held on 4 March received briefing on the operations of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM).<sup>3</sup> The session was held within the context of the decision of the SADC 43<sup>rd</sup> Ordinary Summit, held on 17 August 2023 that endorsed the decision of the Organ Troika Summit of 16 August 2023 to extend the SAMIM's mandate by 12 months, making the new end date 15 July 2024. In addition to the extension, the Summit instructed the leadership of SAMIM to initiate a step-by-step drawdown starting from 15 December 2023, with the complete withdrawal to be finalized by 15 July 2024. This is premised on the SADC's position that it cannot run two missions simultaneously. The outcome of the session was a [communiqué](#).



The 1203<sup>rd</sup> Session of the PSC  
Source: @AUC\_PAPS

With regards to the ongoing situation in northern Mozambique, the PSC expressed 'deep concern over the growing humanitarian crisis and underscored the need for redoubled efforts in the

<sup>3</sup> The session received a briefing from Sergio Baloi, the representative of the Republic of Mozambique, and a presentation from Professor Kula Ishmael Theletsane, Director, Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Affairs, Southern African Development Community (SADC) Secretariat.



mobilization of humanitarian assistance to the population affected by the current conflict in northern Mozambique'. In light of the escalating situation, the council's response to the SADC's decision for a phased withdrawal of SAMIM was not one of fullhearted endorsement. Instead, the Council took 'note' of the decision and requested to share experiences and lessons learned, to conduct a comprehensive study and a needs assessment, and for the SADC to provide regular reports and updated briefings.

The Council's requests reflect a cautious approach towards the situation in northern Mozambique, indicating a desire to avoid the emergence of a vacuum on the departure of SAMIM. The stated goal of reviewing the Mozambican government's progress in preparing to fill the void left by SAMIM underscores the importance of assessing the country's readiness to stabilize itself. This calls for a comprehensive study should delve into the root causes, dynamics, and challenges of the conflict, it highlights a recognition for not only avoiding the emergence of a vacuum but also the implementation of a multidimensional stabilization plan or strategy. If this approach of the PSC is to be effective, it needs to ensure that there is follow-up and sustained attention. Additionally, while supporting the Mozambican government is crucial, there is a need to ensure that assistance reaches affected communities and addresses underlying grievances.

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Furthermore, the PSC's request for regular reports and briefings highlights the importance of ongoing monitoring for

adaptive and effective responses. Yet, it also prompts questions about the Council's strategies for utilizing gathered information to inform interventions. The request for regular reports and briefings was also made during the 1062<sup>nd</sup> session of the PSC held in January 2022. Yet, the PSC has only met once in 2022 and failed to meet in 2023. Without clear strategies in place, there is a risk that these efforts may not translate into tangible results on the ground.

### Key actionable decision requiring follow-up

#### At the 1203<sup>rd</sup> session, the PSC requested:

- The SADC Secretariat to share experiences and lessons learned with the Peace and Security Council on the nature, scope, depth, challenges and possible recommendations to inform future engagements;
- The AU Commission, in partnership with the Government of Mozambique, to conduct a comprehensive study;
- To conduct a needs assessment to identify the necessary support to assist the government in its goal to degrade ASWJ and safeguard the territorial integrity of the country; and
- SADC to provide reports to the AU Commission and regular updated briefings to the PSC on the evolution of the situation in northern Mozambique and the operations of SAMIM.

## THE PSC AFFIRMS NO VIABLE MILITARY SOLUTION TO THE CONFLICT IN EASTERN DRC AS IT GRANTS SADC'S REQUEST FOR ENDORSEMENT OF ITS MISSION - SAMIDRC

The 1203<sup>rd</sup> session also included an agenda item for the consideration of the Situation in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Deployment of the Southern African Development Community Mission in the DRC (SAMIDRC).<sup>4</sup> The session was convened on the request of the SADC, primarily as a means for securing diplomatic, financial and logistical backing for its deployment in the DRC. SADC took the decision to deploy SAMIDRC on 8 May 2023 after a request from Kinshasa for SADC's support in its fight against the M23. A Status of Force Agreement (SOFA) was signed between SADC and the DRC in November 2023, setting the stage for the mission's deployment in December 2023. It is also worth recalling that in December 2023, the Congolese government expressed its dissatisfaction with the East African Community Regional Force (EACRF) over its inability to neutralise and disarm the M23 and it ceased its operations at the end of its mandate in early December following the reluctance of Kinshasa to renew the SOFA with the EAC, leading to the regional force's withdrawal from the eastern DRC. Despite the persisting and growing need for stabilizing the Eastern DRC, the UN mission in DRC (MONUSCO) also commenced

<sup>4</sup> During the session, the PSC received a briefing from Christophe Lutundula Apala Pen'Apala, the Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the DRC. Additionally, statements were delivered by Rose Sakala, Permanent Representative of Zambia, representing the SADC Chair of the Organ on Politics and Kula Ishmael Theletsane Defence and Security Affairs and Director of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Affairs.

its drawdown at the request of Kinshasa. Unlike the EACRF whose mandate was tied to the political track of the Nairobi process, SAMIDRC has an offensive mandate in support of the Congolese government's military operations.



The 1203<sup>rd</sup> Session of the PSC  
Source: @AUC\_PAPS

The fact that SAMIDRC is being deployed while the EACRF and MONUSCO are made to pack and leave raises questions on whether this mission mainly operates in support of the armed forces of the DRC's military campaign against armed insurgent groups, particularly the M23. Worth noting is also the reference made to the SADC common defence pact as a basis for the deployment of SAMIDRC.

In the [Communique](#) adopted by the Session, the PSC called for an immediate and unconditional cessation of hostilities and for the establishment of a humanitarian corridor to aid the delivery of much-needed assistance.

Most significantly, the PSC further underscored the fact that there is no viable military solution to the situation in the eastern DRC. This emphatic rejection of military solution suggests that the PSC is not convinced that the use of force is the avenue for stabilizing eastern DRC. It is to be

recalled that in 2013 the successful military campaign against the M23 while successful in defeating the M23 militarily, failed to politically resolve the conditions that led to the emergence of the M23 leading the resurgence of the armed insurgent group in early 2022.

Alongside its emphasis that there is no viable military solution, the PSC underscored the importance of the diplomatic efforts embodied in the Nairobi and Luanda processes. Thus, the statement amplifies the PSC's preference to the necessity and primacy of diplomatic approaches in resolving the issues prevalent in the eastern DRC.

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Furthermore, the PSC called upon the AU Commission to organize a follow-up Quadripartite Summit to assess the progress made in the implementation of commitments from the 1st Quadripartite Summit. This aligns with the decision made at the inaugural Quadripartite Summit in June 2023 to establish the summit as a recurring platform for harmonization and consultations.

While Rwanda did not participate in the session of the PSC, it sent a [letter](#) to the AU Commission Chairperson expressing its opposition to the endorsement of SAMIDRC. This opposition from Rwanda did not dissuade the PSC from endorsing the mission. Yet, the language used in the communique is indicative of the lack of full consensus on the part of PSC member states. For example, instead of welcoming, the PSC merely took note of the SADC decision of 8 May 2023 for the deployment of SAMIDRC.

With regards to supporting SAMIDRC, the PSC requested the mobilization of crucial support for the SAMIDRC including from the AU Peace Fund Crisis Reserve Facility. Moreover, the PSC emphasized the urgent need to expedite the transfer of donated equipment, currently located at the AU Continental Logistics Base in Douala, Cameroon, to bolster SAMIDRC's efforts in the field.

Furthermore, in relation to the SADC's request for UN support for the SAMIDRC, the PSC requested the UN Security Council (UNSC) in its communique to provide the necessary material and financial resources. It is to be recalled that the UNSC while extending the mandate of MONUSCO in December 2023 indicated that it would evaluate the circumstances under which limited logistical and operational assistance could be provided to an AU-mandated regional force deployed within MONUSCO's operational area, in alignment with MONUSCO's mandate and within existing resources.' Following the 1203<sup>rd</sup> session, the AUPSC Chair formally relayed its decision to the Security Council President through a letter on 13 March. The letter carried the AUPSC's hope that their request would receive positive consideration. Whether the UNSC would act depends on a number of considerations including the submission of a proposal from the UN Secretary-General and arrangements put in place by SAMIDRC with respect to compliance standards.

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## Key actionable decisions requiring follow-up

The PSC requested the AU Commission:

- To convene a second Quadripartite Summit to follow up on progress on the implementation of commitments made during the 1st Summit of the Quadripartite;
- Working in close collaboration with SADC to provide regular briefings, at least every quarter, to the Council on the activities of SAMIDRC; and
- Requested the AU Commission to transmit this Communique to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for information and to request the UNSC to provide the required material and financial resources to enable SAMIDRC to effectively discharge its mandate.

## AS PART OF ITS REVIEW OF THE BRIEFING ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE PANEL OF THE WISE, THE PSC DISCUSSED THE INSTITUTIONAL, OPERATIONAL AND WORKING METHODS CONDITIONS OF THE PANEL

The 1204<sup>th</sup> session held on 13 March 2024 was dedicated to the briefing of the Panel of the Wise (PoW) on its activities as well as that of its subsidiary bodies.<sup>5</sup> Convened in accordance with PSC's decision during its 665<sup>th</sup> meeting in March 2017, the session served to update Council on the activities of the Panel. The deliberation reflected not only the activities of the Panel but also its institutional and operational arrangements and relationships as well as working methods.

<sup>5</sup> Professor Babacar Kante, Chairperson of the AU Panel of the Wise gave the briefing to the Council on its activities.



The 1204<sup>th</sup> Session of the PSC

Source: @AUC\_PAPS

As the [communique](#) adopted by the session indicates, on the institutional interface of the Panel with AU bodies with relevant mandates, the issues that the PSC deliberations covered include a) the Panel's role in revitalizing cooperation with similar mechanisms at the Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs),<sup>6</sup> b) the operationalization of the roles of the subsidiary mechanisms of the panel – FemWiseAfrica, PanWise and Network of African Youth (WiseYouth) – and the importance of coordination and ensuring synergy of efforts in conflict prevention as well as the need for creating platforms of meaningful participation of women and youth in preventive diplomacy, mediation and peacebuilding and the engagement and the signing of Framework of Cooperation with APR Panel of Eminent Persons. The PSC also encouraged the Panel to extend a similar relationship with the Banjul Commission, which is erroneously stated as the African Court instead of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights.

<sup>6</sup> Reference is made to the structures similar to the Panel of the Wise established at the RECs/RMs levels notably the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Council of the Wise, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) Panel of Elders, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) Committee of Elders, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Panel of Elders and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Mediation Reference Group.

In terms of the operational arrangements of the functioning of the Panel, the activity report of the Panel highlighted the perennial challenges of provision of the requisite resources for the effective execution of its mandate. In this respect, the PSC reiterated its request for the AU Commission 'to provide requisite resources, including political, human and financial resources, to enable the Panel to implement its mandate effectively in line with its modalities to ensure the timely prevention and resolution of conflicts in Africa.' Additionally, the PSC also tasked the AU Commission to 'facilitate rapid deployment mechanism for the Panel of the Wise to timely respond to emerging conflicts and crises.' Among others, this necessitates that the Panel and its membership are organized to operate on a standby basis.

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The other aspect of the work of the Panel that the session addressed concerns the working methods of the Panel. In this respect, the Communique of the session canvassed such issues of the Panel's working methods as part of the **key actionable decisions of the session**. Thus, the PSC requested the AU Commission to:

- i. facilitate the provision of mission reports of the Panel of the Wise to the Council;
- ii. ensure the Panel of the Wise receives early warning information and analyses to enable the Panel to proactively deploy preventive diplomacy efforts;
- iii. strategic reviews of the Panel of the Wise's activities to evaluate the effectiveness of the Panel's interventions, identify areas for improvement, and adjust strategies in alignment with the dynamic nature of conflict and

crisis situations on the continent; and

- iv. support and facilitate joint deployments of the Panel of the Wise with similar regional bodies, particularly in contexts requiring urgent attention, leveraging the collective expertise and resources for conflict prevention and management efforts.

One of the key outcomes of the session was the call of the PSC for follow-up and re-engagement plan by the Panel for maintaining sustained attention to countries that the Panel visited as part of its conflict prevention initiative. Additionally, the PSC requested the Panel to continue engaging stakeholders in countries where it undertook missions. These are key not only for following up on recommendations made by the Panel as pointed out by the PSC but also for monitoring developments in those countries.

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As if the Panel's mandate is not itself onerous enough and the Panel has the luxury of adding further responsibilities, the PSC encouraged the PoW to support the implementation of peace agreements on the Continent, as well as support mediation efforts of AU High-Level Panels in their respective areas of engagement. The PSC also further muddled the role of the Panel when it envisaged the critical need to utilize the Panel's extensive expertise and influence to accompany Mali, Gabon, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Niger and Sudan to return to constitutional order, as well as processes in South Sudan and Chad. Instead of the Panel, these transitions each require a standing mechanism that catalyzes and facilitates the

initiation and implementation of relevant reforms that would ground the countries on transition on a solid path for not only achieving restoration of constitutional order but also avoiding the recurrence of unconstitutional changes of government. Thus viewed, the expansion of the work areas of the Panel envisaged in the outcome of the session will not advance the effectiveness of the Panel. If anything, it would reduce the Panel's focus on its core areas of responsibilities relating to preventive diplomacy.

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Both the deliberations and the outcome of the session reflect a continuing lack of clarity about the role of the Panel. While the Panel's mandate covers preventive diplomacy and advisory roles, it seems that there is an expectation for it to expand its role to early warning, mediation, and provision of support to countries in transition. As an essentially technical process with its own protocols and modules for tracking and measuring as well as analysing various risk factors, the provision of briefings on country situations and horizon scanning briefings should be left to the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) supported by CISSA and APRM which have early warning roles on account of their mandate and areas of work. The best use of the role of the Panel – as per the mandate entrusted to it under the PSC Protocol and its standing as a preventive diplomacy instrument that engages in preventive or de-escalation action using the influence and stature of its members – would be for it to initiate preventive action on the basis of the early warning provided by CEWS. Such a focused use of the Panel

would not only provide clarity on the focus of the Panel's mandate and areas of work but also avoid the risk of the Panel spreading thinly with little effectiveness. The most accurate formulation of the 1104<sup>th</sup> PSC session communique in this respect tasks the AU Commission to ensure that the Panel 'receives early warning information and analyses to enable the Panel to proactively deploy preventive diplomacy efforts.'

This is also premised on the kind of instruments identified for the Panel's use in the Modalities for the functioning of the Panel of the Wise adopted during PSC's 100<sup>th</sup> meeting which ranges from establishing a channel of communication, shuttle diplomacy, fact-finding mission, assisting and advising mediation teams to advising parties on how to resolve disputes over the implementation of peace agreements.

As documented in the AU PSC [Handbook](#), the Panel's track record shows that the Panel has been particularly effective in its thematic reflections and preventive missions to countries with potential risks of crises particularly in the context of the convening of elections. In this respect, it is also expected that the Panel will have another mission to South Sudan before the country's general elections in December 2024.

## **THE PSC INSTITUTIONALISES A 'HIGH-LEVEL MINISTERIAL SEMINAR ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY IN AFRICA', TO BE REFERRED AS THE 'SWAKOPMUND PROCESS'**

On 23 March, the PSC convened a ministerial-level meeting in the context of the anniversary of the Council's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary by taking stock of women's participation and leadership in peace processes in Africa. This was convened within the framework of

the PSC's annual indicative programme of work which has regularised the convening of a session on women, peace and security (WPS) every year in March. A [Conclusion](#) was adopted as the outcome of the meeting.



High-Level Ministerial Seminar on WPS,  
Swakopmund, Namibia 23 March 2022  
Source: PAPS Repository

Being convened at the ministerial level, opening remarks were delivered by Peya Mushelega, Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of the Republic of Namibia and Chairperson of the PSC for the month of March 2024.<sup>7</sup> The meeting also brought together key participants who play a critical role in advancing the implementation of WPS agenda in Africa including women from specific countries that took part in peace processes.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Statements were also delivered by Bankole Adeoye, AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS) and Parfait Onanga-Anyanga, Special Representative of UN Secretary-General to the AU and Head of the UN Office to the AU (UNOAU). Bineta Diop, Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the AU Commission on WPS and Hanna Tetteh, UN Secretary-General Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa also delivered briefings on the status of implementation of WPS agenda in Africa.

<sup>8</sup> Faida Mwangilwa, a woman peace leader who participated in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) peace process and Ms. Koiti Emmily, signatory of the Revitalized Agreement on The Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) were the two women who participated in the ministerial meeting and shared their experiences as women engaged in peace process in the context of the DRC and South Sudan respectively. Aside from the two, other briefers who took part in the meeting were: Liberata Mulamula, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Tanzania, AWLN Steering Committee Member and Member of the FemWise-Africa Network; Effie Owour, Co-Chair of

As the central area of focus of the ministerial meeting was women's active involvement in formal peace processes, one of the key outcomes highlighted in the Conclusion was the importance of adopting a gender parity policy. As noted in the Conclusion, an AU gender parity policy would play a key role in ensuring that the selection and appointment of mediators, technical experts, special envoys and others relevant to the facilitation of peace processes take into account gender perspectives and meaningful inclusion of women.

**' one of the key outcomes highlighted in the Conclusion was the importance of adopting a gender parity policy. '**

In terms of capacity building and empowering women peace workers, a key aspect that should be factored in at the national, regional and continental levels is the allocation of the necessary financial and technical resources. To this end, the relevance of mobilising the necessary resources for empowering women-led initiatives on peace processes was noted in the Conclusion.

### Relevant previous PSC decision:

1187<sup>th</sup> PSC session [[PSC/PR/COMM.1187 \(2023\)](#)]: the PSC emphasised 'the need to adopt financial mechanisms to facilitate meaningful participation of women in peace processes, including capacity programs to provide the requisite skills in conflict prevention, resolution, and management, as well as post-conflict reconstruction and development'.

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*FemWise-Africa and Member of the AU Panel of the Wise; Willy Nyamitwe, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Burundi to the AU; Perpetua Dufu, Coordinating Director for Multilateral and International Organizations at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration of the Republic of Ghana; and Renata Hessmann Dalaqua (PhD), Head of Programme of Gender and Disarmament at UN Institute for Disarmament Research.*



Towards achieving greater and more meaningful involvement of women in the formal peace process, the Conclusion of the ministerial meeting also stressed the need for the AU and member states to adopt measures for the inclusion of women experts from the FemWise-Africa Network and African Women Leaders Network, in all conflict prevention, management and resolution works.

While this remains an essential element necessary for promoting women's active role in formal peace processes, it is even more crucial to consider and chart avenues for the involvement of women peace workers at the grassroots level who are already making remarkable contribution through informal routes. Further to enabling a broader representation of qualified women from different levels, such an approach would also allow to bring in perspectives and experiences of peace workers in the informal realm, to inform formal peace processes. In its previous engagement on the WPS theme, the PSC also noted the importance of availing more space for the engagement of women in the civil society space.

### Relevant previous PSC decision:

1187<sup>th</sup> PSC session [[PSC/PR/COMM.1187 \(2023\)](#)]: the PSC called for the 'further expansion of space for the engagement of women and civil society organizations, including in AU Platforms on peace, humanitarian and development nexus in strengthening the implementation of the UNSC Resolution 1325 (2000) on WPS'.

Another important component of the Conclusion of the ministerial meeting was the emphasis made on the need for enhancing partnership and synergy between the AU and UN in the implementation of UNSCR [1325\(2000\)](#) on WPS. This is indeed a vital part of enhancing collaboration and coordination between the two organs on

various thematic issues of concern at both levels. In that spirit, the Conclusion called for WPS to be included as an agenda item of this year's annual consultative meeting between the PSC and the UNSC.

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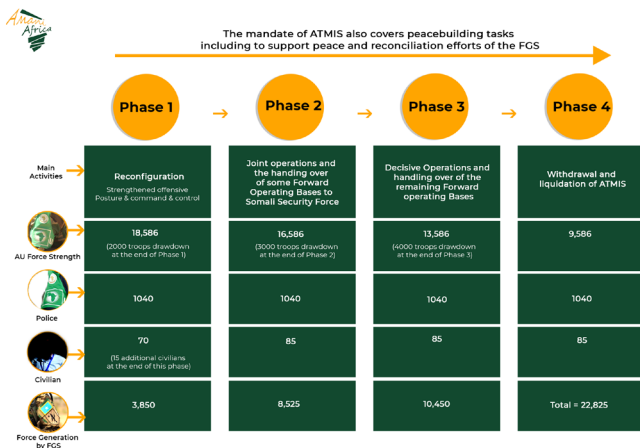
### Key actionable decisions requiring follow-up:

- The AU Commission was requested to develop a 'Policy Framework of Women Quotas in Formal Peace Processes across Africa, which will guide the Continent to meet the statutory minimum of thirty percent (30%) gender quota for women's participation in all conflict prevention and management missions, peace processes and election observation missions led by the AU'.
- The AU Commission was requested to facilitate consultations with CSOs 'working on women and girls living in conflict settings and leverage their lived-in experiences and technical expertise in promoting peace and security at the community, local, and regional levels'.
- The PSC institutionalised the 'High-Level Ministerial Seminar on Women, Peace and Security in Africa' to be formally called the 'Swakopmund Process,' to be held biennially on a rotational basis'.

## PSC POSTPONES ENDORSEMENT OF SOMALIA'S PLAN ON POST-ATMIS AU PRESENCE

At the request of the Government of Somalia, the PSC held an informal consultation. This was held on 27 March while the PSC was holding its induction retreat in Swakopmund, Namibia. During the consultation, a representative of the Government of Somalia presented Somalia's proposal for post-ATMIS security arrangements. At the time, there was an expectation that the PSC would welcome the Somalia Government's strategic plan. However, member states felt that there was a need for further consideration of the proposal. After the briefing from Somalia, they requested that the PAPS Department provide an analytical briefing offering insights on the proposal for the post-ATMIS mission. This analytical briefing was held early this month.

of the PSC Induction Programme and the Military Staff Committee (MSC) held a meeting on 7 March to discuss challenges, progress, and way forward.



## OTHER ACTIVITIES OF THE PSC FOR THE MONTH

No field mission operations conducted by the PSC during March. But the PSC convened the Accra Forum on UCG in Accra, Ghana on 18-19 March for reviewing the implementation of the Accra Declaration from the inaugural forum. Besides the PSC activities, the Committee of Experts (CoE) convened a meeting on 13 March for the preparation



## MEDIA AND RESEARCH SERVICES

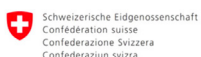
### ABOUT AMANI AFRICA

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.

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