

MONTHLY DIGEST ON THE AFRICAN UNION PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL

AMANI AFRICA

Media and Research Services

April 2024

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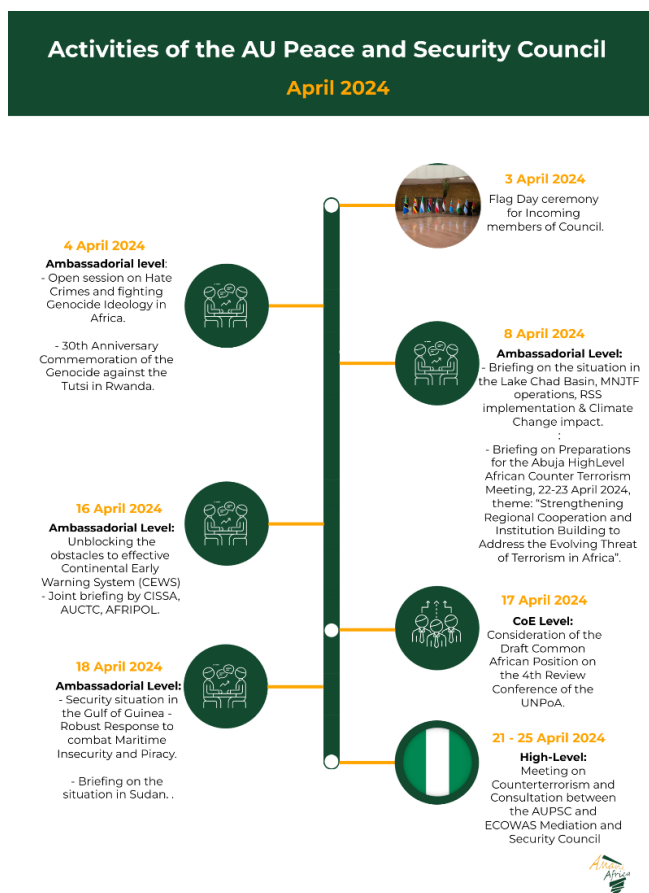
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THE MONTH AT A GLANCE

In April, when The Gambia served as the stand-in chairperson of the month, the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC) had a scheduled [program of work](#) consisting of four sessions along with a 'field visit' to Abuja for the Abuja High-Level Meeting on Counterterrorism meeting. After the revision of the programme, the PSC convened six sessions, conducted a field visit to Abuja and convened the Inaugural Annual Joint Consultative Meeting between the PSC and the Mediation and Security Council of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).



Out of the six sessions, four focused on thematic issues, while two sessions addressed country-specific situations. All the sessions, including the consultative meeting, were held at the level of permanent representatives.

The Provisional Programme of Work for the PSC was revised three times during the month. The first revision included an additional session on 3 April to discuss the 1205th session Communique on Post-ATMIS. This session focused on the briefing by the Federal Republic of Somalia on its proposal for a Post-ATMIS Security Arrangement in Somalia, in accordance with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2710 (2023). The second revision scheduled an additional session on 18 April for a briefing on the situation in Sudan.¹ Lastly, the third revision added the Inaugural Annual Joint Consultative Meeting between the PSC and the Mediation and Security Council of ECOWAS.

While the outcomes of the five sessions were adopted as Communiqué, the outcome of the session on the Prevention of the Ideology of Hate, Hate Crimes and Genocide was adopted as a Press Statement. On average, it took 6 days for the published outcome documents to be released.

AU COMMISSION TASKED TO SUBMIT COMPREHENSIVE AND DETAILED PLANNING ON POST-ATMIS SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS

On 3 April, at its 1205th session, the PSC received a briefing on a Post-ATMIS option in Somalia.² This briefing followed an informal [consultation](#) held on 26 March 2024 at the request of Somalia, which took place as the PSC was holding its induction for newly elected PSC Members in Swakopmund, Namibia. During the informal consultation, the PSC was briefed by a representative

¹ Besides the activities of the revising the PSC activities, the second revision also added a meeting of the Committee of Experts (CoE) meeting for 17 April.

² AU Commissioner for PAPS, Bankole Adeoye, and Somalia's Permanent Representative, Abdullahi Warfa, delivered statements during the session.

of the Government of Somalia on the Government's Proposal for Post-ATMIS Security Arrangements. After Somalia's briefing, PSC Members requested that the PAPS Department provide an analytical briefing offering insights on the proposal, hence the convening of 3 April 2024.

The Proposal for a Post-ATMIS Security Arrangement was prepared by the Government of Somalia pursuant to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution [2710](#) (2023), which requested Somalia to present the Proposal by 31 March 2024. The Proposal outlines, among other things, the envisaged mandate, timeframe, size, visualized deployment, resource requirements and financing of the new proposed mission.

As highlighted in the [communiqué](#) adopted at the 1205th session, the PSC welcomed the Proposal by Somalia for a Post-ATMIS Security Arrangement in the country. While taking note of Somalia's request for an 'AU-led, United Nations authorized peace support operation' to replace ATMIS from 1 January 2025, the PSC stopped short of endorsing the Proposal. Instead, the PSC requested the AU Commission to undertake 'a comprehensive and detailed planning based on the situation on the ground, including undertaking threat assessments, in consultation with the Government of Somalia, the ATMIS Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs), and the UN, and report back to Council by the end of April 2024.'

Another key highlight of the communiqué is the emphasis on the imperative of ensuring 'adequate, predictable and sustainable financing' to the post-ATMIS mission. Within this context, the communiqué alludes to the intention to invoke UN Security Council Resolution 2719 (2023), which allows AU-led peace support operations authorized by the UN Security Council to access funding from

the UN assessed contributions on a case-by-case basis.

Key actionable decision requiring follow-up:

- The PSC requested the AU Commission to undertake a comprehensive and detailed planning based on the situation on the ground, including undertaking threat assessments, in consultation with the Federal Government of Somalia, the ATMIS TCCs, and the UN, and report back to the Council by the end of April 2024.

PSC WELCOMES THE APPOINTMENT OF THE AU SPECIAL ENVOY ON THE PREVENTION OF GENOCIDE AND OTHER ATROCITIES

On 4 April 2024, the PSC convened its 1206th session on the Prevention of the Ideology of Hate, Hate Crimes and Genocide.³ Convened in accordance with PSC's decision adopted at its [678th](#) session held on 11 April 2017 in which it decided to convene annually, in April, a meeting on the prevention of the ideology of hate, Genocide and hate crimes in Africa.⁴

The last meeting of the Council on this subject was during its [1147th](#) session held on 6 April 2023, in which, among other pronouncements, requested the Chairperson of the AU Commission to expedite the appointment of an AU Special Envoy on the [Prevention of Hate Crimes and the Crime of](#)

³ This was convened in pursuit of Article 4(h), (j) and (o) of the AU Constitutive Act and Aspirations 4 and 5 of Agenda 2063 and in the context of the annual commemoration of the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda.

⁴ During the meeting presentations were delivered from the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Rwanda to the AU, Maj. Gen. (Rtd) Charles Karamba; and European Union representative, Javier Nino Perez as well as RECs/RMs representatives.

Genocide. In this regard, the [AU Commission Chairperson appointed Adama Dieng](#) as the first AU special envoy for the prevention of the crime of genocide and other mass atrocities.



"To those who would seek to divide us, we must deliver a clear, unequivocal and urgent message: hate again! On this solemn day of remembrance, let's pledge to stand as one against all forms of hatred and discrimination. Let's ensure that the acts that began on April 7, 1948 are never forgotten and never repeated. Together, we will build a better world."

In the address, AUC Chairperson Moussa Faki Mahamat, State Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, stated: "It is a solemn promise, sworn in the hearts of all gathered here, that such horrific crimes will never again stain the legacy of human civilization. As we join tribute to the memory of those who perished, let their sacrifice serve as a beacon, guiding us towards a world where tolerance and understanding prevail."

On 6 April 2024, the AUC Chairperson, Moussa Faki Mahamat, appointed Mr Adama Dieng of Senegal as the first African Union Special Envoy for Prevention of the Crime of Genocide and other mass atrocities, to drive the AU Agenda to combat the ideology of Hate and Genocide on the Continent. Furthermore, the AUC staff observed a Moment of Silence at 12pm, 8 April 2024, at the AUHQ.

The event was attended by officials from AU Commission, representatives of the AU member states, members of the diplomatic corps, AU organs, religious institutions, human rights institutions, intergovernmental organizations, civil society organizations, UN agencies, think tanks, international organizations, academic institutions in Ethiopia, staff of the AUHQ and members of the Rwandan community.

As part of the pre-event activities of the commemoration, on 4 April 2024, the AU Peace and Security Council held an open session on Hate Crime and fight against Genocide Ideology in Africa.

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There will also be a Symposium on the Commemoration of the 1948 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda and Administration of Staff Policy Brief on 22 May 2024.

During the session, participants proposed various measures including establishing effective accountability mechanisms, implementing preventive measures, strengthening the AU's early warning systems, and using education to sensitize young children on the impact of genocide. Additionally, they suggested implementing programs to reduce hate crimes, with particular attention to the impact of the digital space.

While providing these forward-looking recommendations, the interventions from member states overlooked the ongoing situation in Sudan and failed to address allegations of genocide in Darfur, Sudan. This omission undermines the credibility of the recommendations and suggests a gap between rhetoric and action.



The 1206th Session of the PSC Source: @AUC_PAPS

From the [Press Statement](#) adopted, the PSC also welcomed the development of the African Union Transitional Justice Policy (AUT-JP) and recommended it as an instrument to guide Member States in the implementation of their national transitional justice processes and/or programmes. In the same context, the Council encouraged the AU Commission to continue applying the AUT-JP and the Post Conflict and Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) Policy to support efforts by Member States to promote accountability, justice, national reconciliation and unity as well as to comprehensively address all structural root causes that can trigger hate ideology, hate crime and genocide in Africa. As previously mentioned in its outcome documents on the same subject, the Council urged Member States to enhance their national capabilities for early warning and early response. It also calls on Member States to raise awareness through various media channels and both formal and informal education. Furthermore, the Council encourages Member States to include subjects such as human rights, peace, leadership, reconciliation, tolerance, unity, justice, and democratic values in their education curricula. Additionally, Member States were encouraged to develop inclusive policies for their diverse populations.

Furthermore, Council expressed appreciation to the UN and the rest of the international community, particularly the International

Police Organization (INTERPOL), for their efforts and cooperation with Member States in preventing the ideology of hate, hate crimes and genocide, as well as in tracking fugitives of these crimes.

Key actionable decisions requiring follow-up

The PSC:

- Requested the AU Commission to urgently provide comprehensive policy elaboration of 'hate speech' and 'hate crimes,' as well as to compile adequate data to deter, prevent and combat these scourges more effectively;
- Reiterated the significance of implementing the decision of the AU Assembly on the construction of the AU Human Rights Memorial dedicated to victims of human rights violations in Africa, such as the genocide against the Tutsis in Rwanda, apartheid rule in South Africa, the Red Terror in Ethiopia, colonialism and the Slave Trade; and
- Council reiterated the call for the Panel of the Wise to undertake a review of the status of implementation of the recommendations contained in the Report of the OAU International Panel of Eminent Personalities on the 1994 Rwanda Genocide and surrounding events.

THE PSC DECIDED TO UNDERTAKE A SOLIDARITY FIELD VISIT TO THE LAKE CHAD BASIN REGION

On 8 April, the PSC dedicated its 1207th session to a briefing on the situation in the Lake Chad Basin, the Operations of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) and Implementation of the Regional Stabilization Strategy, Recovery and Resilience (RS-SRR).⁵



The 1107th session of the PSC Source: @AUC_PAPS

The session took place in the context of a request made at the 1197th PSC session on 30 January 2024. During that session, the AU Commission and the Lake Chad Basin Region Commission (LCBC) were requested to extend the AU's support to MNJTF for an additional year and to provide regular reports on MNJTF's activities.

The [communiqué](#) adopted during the session is nearly empty of substantive content. There is no reference to the state of the security situation in the areas of operation of the MNJTF.

"The communiqué adopted during the session is nearly empty of substantive content."

⁵ During the session, briefings were delivered by H.E. Mamman Nuhu, the Executive Secretary of the Lake Chad Basin Commission and Head of the MNJTF and by Major General Ibrahim Sallau Ali, the MNJTF Force Commande.

Despite the evolution of the security situation with the emergence and dominance of Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati wal-Jihad (JAS) and Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), the communique refers only to Boko Haram. Conspicuously absent is also the implications of the political developments in the region after the coup in Niger in July 2023 for the effective functioning of the MNJTF. The [Insights](#) on the PSC dedicated to the session drew attention to Niger's declaration of suspension of its participation in the MNJTF, the prohibition of Nigerian troops from crossing into Niger and the MNJTF force commander from visiting Niger. The PSC missed the opportunity to encourage all the participating countries of the MNJTF to sustain their close collaboration as key measure for avoiding reversals in the gains registered in the fight against terrorist groups.

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During the session, the PSC, recognizing that the MNJTF should extend its role beyond kinetic activities, urged the LCBC countries and the LCBC Commission to operationalize the police and civilian components as outlined in the MNJTF Strategic Concept of Operations (CONOPs). It is to be recalled that the PSC at its 1126th session called for 'restructuring of the MNJTF into a multidisciplinary force with robust police and civilian components that takes into consideration a comprehensive approach to addressing terrorism'. As stated in the session's communique, this is in recognition of the need to enhance efforts to comprehensively address the structural root causes and facilitate the stabilization of areas liberated from Boko Haram.

The PSC further expressed its support towards the commencement of the second phase of the Regional Strategy for Stabilization, Recovery, and Resilience (RS-SRR). To this end, it requested the AU Commission to increase its backing for the LCBC, including coordination of a Commission-wide effort for stabilization and garnering more support for the MNJTF. The complete lack of specificity and imprecision on the kind of support and timeline for such support renders this decision incapable of effective implementation.

Considering that funding is one of the constraints, the PSC welcomed new developments in the signing of a Letter of Agreement (LOA) between the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and LCBC, stipulating the modalities for continued financial support to the LCBC for enhanced coordination in the implementation of the RSS.

The new elements that this session introduced mainly concern youth, peace, and security, as well as women, peace, and security. Apart from calling for the development of national action plans by MNJTF countries, the PSC called for integration into the territorial action plans of the countries in the region to develop national and territorial action plans for United Nations Security Council Resolutions 2250 and 2419, to involve youth in the stabilization process.

Of significance in terms of notable elements of the outcome of the session is the PSC's decision to undertake a solidarity field visit to the Lake Chad Basin region during the first half of 2024. This could provide an opportune moment to consult with the TCCs on this matter.

Key Actionable decisions requiring follow-up

At the 1207th Session, the PSC:

- Requested the AU Commission to continue to enhance its support for the LCBC, including coordination of Commission-wide efforts for the stabilization and mobilization of additional support to the MNJTF;
- Requested the AU Commission to continue providing technical, logistical and financial support to the MNJTF in fighting terrorism, through its mechanisms on Peace and Security; and
- Decided to undertake a solidarity field visit to the Lake Chad Basin region during the first half of 2024.

PSC CALLS FOR MEASURES TO ENHANCE THE UTILITY OF THE CONTINENTAL EARLY WARNING SYSTEM (CEWS)

On 16 April, during its 1208th session, the PSC received a joint briefing by the Committee of Intelligence and Security Services of Africa (CISSA), the African Center for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT) and the African Union Mechanism for Police Cooperation (AFRIPOL) on unblocking obstacles for an effective Continental Early Warning System (CEWS).⁶

As highlighted in our [pre-session analysis](#), early warning and early action have faced technical, institutional and political challenges, limiting the effectiveness of the PSC in conflict prevention. One such challenge, noted in the [communiqué](#) adopted at the 1208th session is, the persisting 'culture of denialism' by Member

⁶ Acting Executive Secretary for the CISSA and the representatives of ACSRT and AFRIPOL briefed the Council.

States and RECs/RMs regarding credible early warning reports of looming crises or potential conflict.

The main focus of the session was to explore strategies for 'unblocking obstacles and ensuring effective early warning and response.' In this respect, PSC urged the Commission, along with ACSRT, AFRIPOL, and CISSA, to take specific measures and report back to the Council before the end of 2024. One of the measures highlighted in the communiqué is to expedite the ongoing AU Commission institutional reforms, aiming to enhance the utility of the CEWS in the PSC decision-making process. However, it remains unclear how the institutional reform could practically enhance the CEWS, as the same reform is to blame for adversely affecting the early warning system by removing a dedicated division for CEWS from the PAPS structure contrary to the PSC Protocol.

The specific measures, outlined below, some of which reiterate previous decisions, are generally on target. Yet, the challenge lies in translating those measures into action. What is encouraging about this session is the effort to attach specific timeframes to the decisions, making follow-up easier.

Key actionable decisions requiring follow-up

The PSC requested the AU Commission to:

- Expedite the ongoing AUC institutional reforms to enhance the utility of the CEWS in PSC decision-making processes;
- Optimally utilize the Panel of the Wise and AU Inter-Regional Knowledge Exchange on Early Warning and Conflict Prevention (I-RECKE);

- Facilitate the coordination of early warning information flow, as well as complementarity and synergy of CEWS, ACSRT and AFRIPOL, as well as sharing of intelligence by CISSA;
- Invest in technological innovations and spearhead the development of bespoke technological solutions to enhance CEWS's capabilities and facilitate early actions;
- Spearhead the expansion of training programs in advanced data analytics, cyber security, and the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning and Digital Learning to enhance predictive accuracy and analytical depth by CEWS;
- Ensure the CEWS, ACSRT and AFRIPOL are adequately resourced and funded; in this regard, consider mobilizing funding from diverse sources such as partners and the private sector;
- Monitor, track and ensure the implementation of previous decisions of the Council on Continental Early Warning and Security Outlook, including the quarterly briefing by ACSRT, AFRIPOL and CISSA, and the elaboration of the trigger mechanism and indicators to facilitate PSC's timely response to early warning;
- Organize in-house training for Member States and RECs/RMs on early warning, data mining, information flow and report writing, and the ongoing institutional reforms;
- Timely disseminate daily, weekly and monthly early warning reports to Member States; and
- Create avenues for Member States to embrace the Continental Structural Conflict Prevention Framework to address the root causes of violent conflict before its manifestation.

AU COMMISSION REQUESTED TO PRESENT OPTIONS FOR THE INVESTIGATION OF ATROCITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITY

On 18 April, the PSC convened its 1209th session to consider the Situation in Sudan. The convening took place approximately a month after the AU High-Level Panel on Sudan concluded its shuttle diplomacy tour in the region. It should be noted that the Panel was appointed at the beginning of the year as per the request of the PSC in its 1185th session.

Relevant previous PSC decisions:

- 1185th PSC session [[PSC/MIN/COMM.1185 \(2023\)](#)]: the PSC requested 'the AU Commission to establish an AU ad hoc High-Level Panel on Sudan'.
- 1149th PSC session [[PSC/PR/COMM.1149 \(2023\)](#)]: the PSC decided 'to undertake a field visit to Sudan, but the visit could not happen yet due to the security condition of the country'.

Since the last PSC session, the Panel has been constituted and activated, enabling the AU to have a dedicated mechanism that fully works on the Sudan file. This session, the first session on Sudan in 2024, provided an opportunity for the PSC to receive updates on both the situation in Sudan and the work of the Panel.

The PSC received updates on the situation in Sudan not only from the AU High-Level Panel but also from the Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General, Ramtane Lamamra, and a representative of IGAD. As can be gathered from the [communiqué](#) adopted during the session, the briefings and the deliberations on the situation in Sudan focused on three

areas. The first of these concerns is the escalation of fighting. In this respect apart from condemning the continuation of the war and affirming that the situation in Sudan cannot be solved militarily, the PSC is also concerned with how the war is conducted. Accordingly, the PSC denounced 'the atrocities, including indiscriminate attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure, and the reported incidents of sexual and gender-based violence against women, girls and children in the conflict in Sudan.'

Moving in the direction of taking action and beyond condemnation, the PSC tasked the AU Commission 'to present options for the investigation of the atrocities and accountability and report these to Council in due course.' As important as the request for a proposal on investigating atrocities is, the lack of a specified timeline for reporting on the proposal hugely reduced the urgency of the matter.

The second area of focus of the session on the situation in Sudan concerned the impacts of the raging fight in Sudan. In this respect, the PSC condemned the 'attendant violations of human rights, international human rights law (sic) and international humanitarian law.' Concerning the impact of the war on the Sudanese state, the PSC underscored 'the importance of ensuring the protection of the Sudanese state, its institutions and its people.' On the humanitarian consequences of the war, the PSC expressed 'grave concern over the rapidly deteriorating humanitarian situation in Sudan, which has brought the country to the brink of famine.' The PSC emphasized the importance of donors fulfilling pledges made during the 2023 Geneva Conference and the 2024 International Humanitarian Conference in Paris.

The third and final area of concern on the situation in Sudan during this session focused on external interference. While this is not new and the PSC previously expressed its

condemnation of external interference, this time around it additionally 'appealed' 'to all actors currently providing military support to the belligerents to refrain from further fueling the conflict and to, instead, play a more positive and constructive role in support of peace.'

On the work of the High-Level Panel, the PSC received an update from the chair of the Panel, Mohamed Ibn Chambas. In his briefing, Chambas informed the Council about the implementation of the mandate of the Panel, which is organized around three areas consisting of: shuttle diplomacy to Sudan and neighbouring countries; enhancing coordination among key stakeholders to minimize duplication of efforts and lastly, preparing for an inclusive inter-Sudanese political dialogue. Following its operationalization in February 2024, the Panel has focused much of its efforts on shuttle diplomacy. In this regard, the PSC not only welcomed the establishment of the High-Level Panel on Sudan but also commended the Panel for their initiatives in 'mobilizing support for the AU strategy towards an all-Sudanese inclusive political dialogue'.



The 1209th Session of the PSC Source: @AUC_PAPS & @Bankole_Adeoye

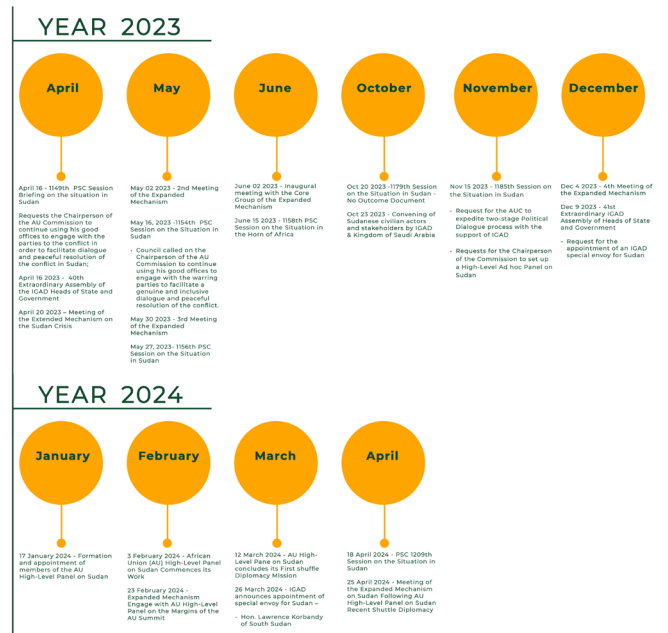
The session also discussed the current state of efforts for achieving peace in Sudan. Thus, the PSC appealed 'to the warring parties to implement in full the agreements reached in the Jeddah Declaration of 11 May 2023 relating to humanitarian access and protection of civilians, in order to stave off a looming

famine and provide relief to the needy population.’ It also urged ‘the parties to conflict to fully participate in an expanded, more inclusive Jeddah peace process, with the participation of the AU, IGAD and neighboring countries.’ While there were expectations of the resumption of the Jeddah talks with expanded participation, it remains suspended.

Additionally, the PSC encouraged ‘the High-Level Panel to continue the consultations with all key Sudanese stakeholders, as well as with regional and international stakeholders, to ensure the successful organization of the all-Sudanese inclusive dialogue.’ As the first step to this end, the Panel is tasked to convene ‘the preparatory/planning process’ in collaboration with IGAD and neighboring states (to ensure the participation of Sudan’s neighbors who are not part of IGAD – Chad, Egypt and Libya). This is a technical phase that will formulate the parameters for participation and the proposed agenda for ‘the all-Sudanese inclusive dialogue.’ This phase of the dialogue is anticipated to commence during the first week of June. The next phase is the actual convening of the all-inclusive Sudanese dialogue.

The other recurring issue regarding efforts for peace that the PSC addressed was the multiplication of platforms and initiatives. In this respect, apart from reaffirming the centrality of the AU Roadmap for the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of Sudan articulated in the 1156th session of the PSC, the PSC underscored ‘the importance of enhanced coordination and complementarity of peace efforts through the AU, IGAD and neighboring countries collaboration.’ As part of the effort to facilitate coherency of various actors involved in the search for resolving the conflict, the PSC requested ‘the Chairperson of the Commission to convene a meeting of the Expanded Mechanism, **as soon as possible**, in order to facilitate enhanced coordination.’ The Joint AU/IGAD High-Level Panel held an engagement with

the Expanded Mechanism two weeks after the session upon the request of the PSC during the session.



Timeline of the PSC’s engagement on the situation in Sudan and diplomatic efforts

Finally, the PSC decided to conduct a field visit to Port Sudan. Previously, the PSC had planned a visit to Sudan during its 1149th session, but it was postponed due to the outbreak of war the following month. This upcoming visit will allow the PSC to engage directly with stakeholders on the ground since the start of the conflict.

Key actionable decisions requiring follow-up

The PSC:

- Requested the AU Commission to present options for the investigation of the atrocities and accountability and report these to Council in due course;
- Requested the Chairperson of the Commission to convene a meeting of the Expanded Mechanism as soon as possible, in order to facilitate enhanced coordination;

- Requested the High-Level Panel, working in close coordination with IGAD and neighbouring countries, to convene the preparatory/planning process for the all-inclusive Sudanese Political Dialogue, as soon as practicable; and
- Decided to undertake a solidarity field visit to Port Sudan, Sudan and engage with the stakeholders on the ground.

THE STATE OF RESPONSE TO GULF OF GUINEA MARITIME INSECURITY AND PROLIFERATION OF INITIATIVES ON THE SPOTLIGHT IN PSC'S LATEST MEETING

On 18 April, the PSC held its 1209th session with the primary objective of receiving a comprehensive briefing on the prevailing Security Situation in the Gulf of Guinea.⁷ The session provided an opportunity to receive updates on both the situation in the Gulf of Guinea and the initiatives being undertaken to address the insecurity affecting this maritime space.

Even though there has been a noticeable decrease in the number of insecurity incidents in the area, the PSC was informed of the continuing occurrence of such incidents in the Gulf of Guinea. These incidents of threats to the maritime security of the region include illicit activities such as piracy, organized crime, illegal fishing, armed

⁷ During the session, a presentation was given by Mr. Venâncio Soares Gomes, the Deputy Executive Secretary of Natural Resources for the Gulf of Guinea Commission. Additional statements were also delivered by representatives from several organizations. These included the Nigeria Navy, the Economic Community of East African States (ECCAS), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the United Nations Office to the AU (UNOAU) and the European Union (EU) Delegation to the AU.

robbery at sea, and the dumping of toxins. These activities pose a significant threat not only to maritime trade but also to the environment.

The [communiqué](#) adopted during the session emphasized the profound impact of these threats on the Continental Blue Economy and the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). This emphasis is crucial as the insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea highlights one of the ways by which insecurity undermines the AfCFTA by disrupting maritime trade routes, exacerbating logistical challenges, and fostering an atmosphere of uncertainty and instability. In a formulation that highlights the lack of precision in PSC outcome documents, the PSC also called for 'the prosecution of those who perpetrate, encourage, finance or facilitate such criminal activities,' without addressing the question of jurisdiction.

While the communiqué puts much focus on reactive measures including the prosecution referenced above, it also makes reference to two important preventive and remedial measures. The first of these is the enhancement of the maritime security capabilities of states in the Gulf of Guinea. In this respect, the PSC urged 'the countries...to further enhance their maritime security capabilities, law enforcement and border control agencies' and to 'ratify', adhere to and implement 'the relevant regional and international instruments and frameworks aimed at addressing maritime insecurity in the region' with particular reference being made in operational paragraph 10 to the Yaoundé Code of Conduct. The second preventive and remedial action highlighted is coordination between the states concerned. In this respect, apart from reiterating 'the need for increased collaboration with regional partners, enhanced intelligence sharing, joint operations, and joint implementation of robust counter-terrorism measures,' the PSC expressed support for 'the enhanced

coordination of their maritime security activities, including joint exercises such as EXERCISE OBANGAME EXPRESS and GRAND AFRICAN NEMO' and harmonization of 'their national legal frameworks, intending to facilitate a collective and coordinated response to maritime challenges in the Continent, as well as to promote judicial cooperation, including extradition of maritime offenders and facilitate cross border operations.'

The session also reflected on the multiplicity of initiatives and actors involved. During the session, it became evident that the response to the various security threats in the Gulf of Guinea is characterized by the involvement of multiple actors and initiatives. These various initiatives include:

- the multinational exercises by the countries of the region with partner countries,
- the EU-Coordinated Maritime Presence (EU-CMP),
- the Combined Maritime Task Force (CMTF) established in May 2022 with the participation of ten Gulf of Guinea countries as a regional mechanism for collective rapid response,
- the Yaoundé Maritime Security Architecture

While references were made to the harmonization of regional mechanisms, the PSC did not exhibit adequate recognition of the proliferation of initiatives and the associated challenge of competing and thinly spread actions that stretch the limited resources and capacities of states. The proliferation necessitates that the PSC requests a mapping of the various initiatives to facilitate harmonization and rationalization for an effective harmonized regional architecture for maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea. This mapping exercise can be carried out as part of the follow-up on the request of the PSC in one of its earlier engagements for assessment of the implementation of all

instruments and frameworks.

Various regional mechanisms including the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Gulf of Guinea Commission have a role to play. Yet only the first two mechanisms were represented during the session. Despite not being part of the session, the communiqué of the session makes various references to the Gulf of Guinea Commission. Underscoring the need for pulling the efforts of the various regional mechanisms, the PSC emphasized the need 'for the concerned Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs) and the Gulf of Guinea Commission to further strengthen cooperation on maritime safety and security in the region.' This is in addition to drawing attention to the need for alignment on the activities of the Combined Maritime Task Force (CMTF) and the Gulf of Guinea Commission.

As noted above, this session did not build on and fully follow up on the status of implementation of various decisions from previous sessions of the PSC. However, the session specifically followed up on three actionable decisions it adopted in earlier sessions. Thus, it demanded the AU Commission expedite 'the activation of the Committee of the Heads of African Navies and Coastguards (CHANS), and the convening of the inaugural meeting of the Committee' and 'the establishment of a Group of Experts or a Task Force.' It also reiterated the need 'to establish within the AU Commission, a coordination mechanism and/or Unit on Maritime Security without any financial implication.'

Apart from the foregoing areas for the action of the AU Commission, the session also addressed other aspects concerning the role of the AU. It is recalled that in May 2022, a meeting of African Naval Staff and Coast Guard chiefs took place in Port Harcourt, Nigeria, leading to the adoption of the Port Harcourt

Declaration. Since the PSC's last session on the subject, the concept of operations for the CMTF has been adopted by 10 countries in the Gulf of Guinea region. In this respect, the PSC encouraged 'the AU Commission to further enhance its engagements with the CMTF and the Gulf of Guinea Commission, to support the alignment of the activities of the two structures.' The PSC also expressed its expectation 'to the successful organization of the AMANI AFRICA within the framework of the African Standby Force (ASF), to enhance preparedness and capability of the ASF in addressing maritime security threats in the Continent.' It is worth noting that the proposal for the organization of an ASF maritime field exercise has been pending for several years. The communique of the session also made no mention or consideration of the financial requirements of the exercise.

Relevant previous PSC decisions that require follow up:

- 1090th PSC session [[PSC/PR/COMM.1090 \(2022\)](#)]:

The PSC:

- ◊ directed the AU Commission to establish a body of experts or a Task Force to coordinate, share knowledge and make recommendations on maritime security to provide technical expertise to Member States and other stakeholders in delivering on the AU's 2050 AIM Strategy and the and Lomé Charter; and
- ◊ requested the AU Commission, in coordination with the RECs/RMs and regional bodies to undertake an assessment of the implementation of all instruments and frameworks on maritime security, in order to address the gaps and propose strategies to enhance their implementation.

- 1174th PSC session [[PSC/PR/COMM.1174 \(2023\)](#)]

The PSC:

- ◊ requested 'the AU Commission to expedite the activation of the Committee of the Heads of African Navies and Coastguards (CHANS), critical to provide strategic advice to the AU, including considering the convening of its inaugural meeting'; and
- ◊ directed the AU Commission to establish within the AU Commission, a coordination mechanism and/or Unit on Maritime Security without any financial implication, that would coordinate, enable sharing of knowledge and experiences by Member States and regions, and produce reports and advise on activities related to maritime security to the Policy Organs.

The Peace and Security Council (PSC), despite emphasizing the need to sign and ratify all regional instruments, has overlooked the follow-up on the draft annexes of the Lomé Charter. In this regard, it is worth noting that in 2017, the AU Office of the Legal Counsel established a Strategic Task Force, which worked on validating the draft Annexes of the Lomé Charter. Furthermore, the PSC has not adequately followed up on its request during its 1090th session. This request urged the AU Commission, in coordination with the RECs/RMs and regional bodies, to assess the implementation of all instruments and frameworks on maritime security with the goal of improving this area. The PSC's follow-through on this request would have been beneficial, as the assessment's results could be used to develop strategies for better implementation of existing instruments and frameworks as well as enhancement of harmonization and coherence.

THE PSC AND ECOWAS MEDIATION AND SECURITY COUNCIL AGREE TO CONVENE ANNUALLY

During the field visit to Abuja, Nigeria the PSC, besides participating in the High-Level Meeting on Counter-Terrorism, also held a joint consultative meeting with the Mediation and Security Council of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS MSC) at the ambassadorial level on 24 April⁸. The consultative meeting is in alignment with Article 16 of the PSC Protocol, which emphasizes the importance of close collaboration and policy coordination with RECs/RMs. This also aligns with the outcomes of several PSC retreats that called for a method to enhance harmonization and coordination between the PSC and the policy bodies of RECs/RMs.

The Joint Consultative Meeting marked a historical first, presenting an opportunity for the AU PSC and the ECOWAS MSC to deliberate on harmonizing decision-making processes. It also aimed to enhance coordination and strengthen synergy in implementing the APSA and AGA, both at regional and continental levels, with a focus on leveraging comparative advantage and complementarity.

⁸ *The Joint Consultative Meeting was co-chaired by H.E. Ambassador Musa Nuhu, who serves as the Permanent Representative of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to ECOWAS and Chair of the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council, and H.E. Ambassador Jainaba Jagne, Permanent Representative of the Republic of The Gambia to the AU and Chairperson of the Peace and Security Council. Important contributions were made by H.E. Ambassador Abdel-Fatau Musah, ECOWAS Commissioner of Political Affairs, Peace and Security, and H.E. Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, AU Commissioner of Political Affairs, Peace and Security, who both participated and made statements during the meeting.*

Given the significant impact of terrorism and Unconstitutional Changes of Government (UCGs) in the region, the meeting primarily focused on counteracting terrorism, violent extremism, and the resurgence of coups on the Continent. The [outcome](#) document adopted by the meeting emphasized deep concern over escalating insecurity due to terrorism and violent extremism, particularly in West Africa, the Sahel region, and the Lake Chad Basin, where terrorist activities severely impact peace and development.

Considering the worsening situation in these regions, the meeting called for effective counter-terrorism measures supported by adequate funding, the meeting appealed for resource mobilization for regional and continental peace operations. Additionally, the meeting underscored the importance of implementing and revitalizing existing regional security mechanisms. These include the Nouakchott and Djibouti Processes, the ECOWAS Plans of Action Against Terrorism, the Accra Initiative, and the Multinational Joint Task Force of the Lake Chad Basin. However, while emphasizing existing mechanisms, the meeting missed the opportunity to give a stronger focus on enhancing regional cooperation and intelligence sharing among West African nations and the role of the African Center for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT) in strengthening the capacity of member states in this regard. Additionally, in contextualizing AU and ECOWAS cooperation, another point that was worth addressing is the need for coordinating military deployments within the areas of responsibility of RECs, in which they could potentially foster a unified purpose and promote efficiency.

Furthermore, the outcomes highlighted the need to address the root causes and structural drivers of terrorism, including poverty, unemployment, political instability, and social inequality. In this regard, the meeting stressed the significance of fostering

community dialogue and sharing best practices to protect communities, especially youth and women, from radicalization that leads to terrorism and violent extremism. This dual approach is important as it underscores the importance of both stringent security measures and proactive community engagement in countering terrorism.



AU PSC and ECOWAS MSC Consultation. Source: @AUC_PAPS

As a follow-up to the Malabo Declaration, the meeting requested the AU Commission to finalize the conduct of the comprehensive study on the financing of terrorism. With regard to UCGs, while expressing concern regarding the resurgence of coups, the meeting emphasized the need to address governance deficits at national levels through joint mediation processes to prevent UCGs and other security issues, reaffirming commitments to adhere to AU and ECOWAS instruments on democratic governance.

In relation to notifications by Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger to withdraw from ECOWAS, the meeting urged continued engagement with these states to maintain regional stability. In this regard, the meeting also reiterated the [Final Communiqué](#) of the Extraordinary Summit of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government on the Political, Peace and Security Situation in the Region adopted on 24 February 2024 in which it encouraged the three Member States to revisit their decision while highlighting Article 91 of

the 1993 ECOWAS [Revised Treaty](#), which lays out the withdrawal procedures.

Additionally, the meeting welcomed the establishment of the PSC Sub-Committee on Sanctions to oversee the implementation of decisions on UCGs, ensuring cooperation with the ECOWAS MSC to devise coordinated and complementary approaches, including the creation of similar ECOWAS structures. While this is a positive initiative as an outcome of the meeting, the establishment of such mechanisms could benefit from engaging and involving relevant stakeholders, such as civil society organizations and regional partners, in the work of the Sub-Committee.

Concerning collaboration and coordination between the PSC and ECOWAS-MSC, the meeting agreed on various mechanisms that require further detailed implementation plans and continued follow-up. These strategies encompass annual joint consultative meetings and frequent interactions between the AU PSC and ECOWAS MSC Chairpersons. The meeting further agreed on the importance of swift communion of decisions on peace and security matters to ensure subsidiarity, complementarity, and coherence in decision-making processes. Joint field missions coupled with joint retreats, the establishment of a team of focal points from both Secretariats and staff exchange visits are also the mechanism agreed by the meeting.

Key actionable decisions requiring follow-up

The PSC and ECOWAS MSC:

- Requested the AU Commission to finalize the conduct of the comprehensive study on the financing of terrorism in Africa, as requested by the Malabo Declaration;

- Agreed to urgently explore innovative means of internal resource mobilization including special levies and engagement with the private sector and continental financial entities; and
- Agreed to institutionalize their cooperation, in particular through the following:
 - i. Holding of annual joint consultative meetings, between the AU PSC and the ECOWAS MSC at all levels, alternately at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa and at the ECOWAS headquarters in Abuja, in rotation;
 - ii. Regular interaction between the AU PSC and the ECOWAS MSC Chairpersons on issues of common concern, including through the use of video-teleconferencing (VTC);
 - iii. Swiftly communicate decisions on peace and security issues to each Council for enhancing subsidiarity and complementarity while ensuring coherence in the decision-making process;
 - iv. Joint field missions to assess situations of common concern and identify further joint action as may be needed;
 - v. Holding of joint retreats/brainstorming sessions to reflect on priorities on peace and security issues of the AU PSC and the ECOWAS MSC and develop appropriate common response strategies;
 - vi. Establish a team of focal points from both Secretariats to facilitate a well-coordinated network for regular meetings/consultations, particularly on issues in the agenda of the PSC and also in the agenda of the ECOWAS MSC; and
 - vii. Organizing staff exchange visits.
- Agreed to convene their Second Annual Joint Consultative meeting in 2025 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, at a date to be mutually agreed.

OTHER ACTIVITIES OF THE PSC FOR THE MONTH

Besides the PSC sessions, the Committee of Experts (CoE) convened a meeting on 17 April for Consideration of the Draft Common African Position on the 4th Review Conference of the UNPoA. Additionally, the PSC held a field visit to Abuja, Nigeria for the High-Level Meeting on Counterterrorism.



MEDIA AND RESEARCH SERVICES

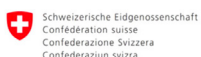
ABOUT AMANI AFRICA

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

Amani Africa wishes to express its gratitude to the Government of Switzerland, the Embassy of Ireland, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Open Society Foundations for the support in the production of this Monthly Digest.



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