

MONTHLY DIGEST ON THE AFRICAN UNION PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL

AMANI AFRICA

Media and Research Services

July, 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
					3rd Accra Reflection Forum on UCC, Accra, Ghana.	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
			i. Situation in Abyei. ii. Informal Consultation on the Proposed AU Model on Trigger Mechanism for Early Warning and Early Action. iii. Informal Engagement with AUC Chairperson on the state of governance, peace and security in Africa. iv. Informal Consultation on Funding Support for Somalia/AU/SSOM Logistics Package.		Policy Conference on 'Peace, Security and Development Nexus,' Mombasa, Kenya.	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Policy Conference on 'Peace, Security and Development Nexus,' Mombasa, Kenya.		(CoE): Preparation for the PSC Ministerial Meeting on 'Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism in Africa.'	(Sub-Committee on Sanctions): Engagement on Political and Socio-economic Developments on Preventive Measures against UCC.			
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	i. (CoE): Consideration of the Proposed AU Model on Trigger Mechanism for Early Warning and Early Action. ii. (MSC): Update on the Continental Logistics Base operations.	Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism in Africa. 	Consideration of the AU Commission Report on Elections in Africa from Jan-Jun 2025 		(MSC): Future of AU's Engagement in Somalia. 	
26	27	28	29	30	31	
	i. Update on the Political Transition in Burkina Faso and Niger.  ii. Consideration of the Outcome of the 2nd Meeting of the PSC Sub-Committee on Sanctions, held on 15 July 2026 on 'Engagement on Political and Socio-Economic Developments on Preventive Measures against UCC.'		48th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.			

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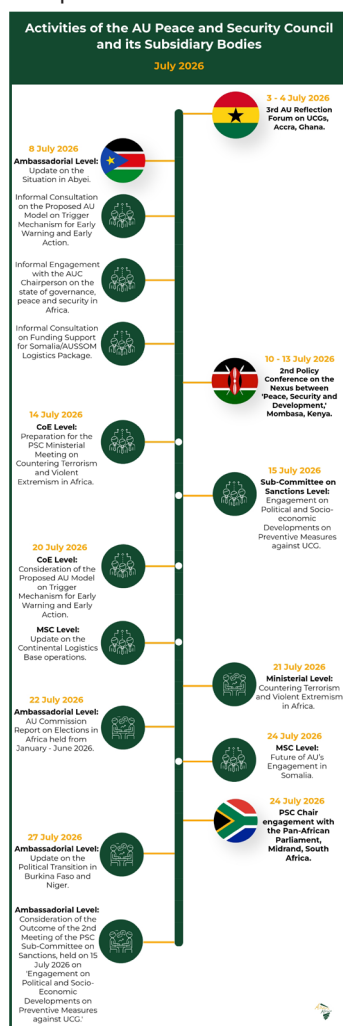
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THE MONTH AT A GLANCE

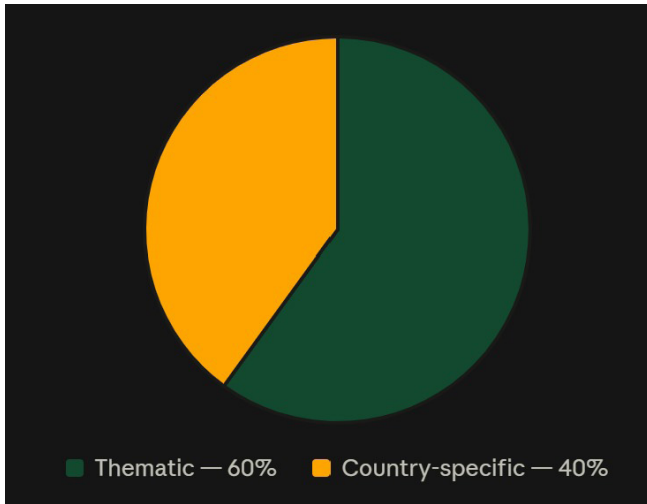
In July, under the chairship of the Republic of Uganda, the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC) had a scheduled [Provisional Programme of Work](#) (PPoW) consisting of four substantive sessions, alongside an informal consultation on the 'Proposed AU Model on Trigger Mechanism for Early Warning and Early Action,' and an engagement with the AU Commission Chairperson. Following the revision of the PPoW, four substantive sessions were held, covering five substantive agenda items as well as another added informal session on 'Funding Support for Somalia/AUSSOM Logistics Package.' Of the five substantive agenda items, two focused on country-specific issues, while the rest addressed thematic issues. Except for one session, 'Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism in Africa,' which was held at the ministerial level, all the others were held at the level of permanent representatives.



Over the course of the month, the PSC PPoW underwent two revisions. The first revision saw the addition of an agenda item on 8 July. This was an informal consultation which focused on the 'Funding Support for Somalia/AUSSOM Logistics Package.' On the same date, 8 July, another informal engagement with the Chairperson of the AU Commission on the 'state of governance, peace and security in Africa' was rescheduled from its originally planned date of 29 July.

Following this, the other change during the first revision of the PPoW was the addition of an agenda item for 20 July, on the 'Consideration of the Proposed AU Model on Trigger Mechanism for Early Warning and Early Action.' It is also worth noting that following the PSC's informal engagement with the Chairperson of the AU Commission on 8 July, this agenda item on early warning was later added to the PPoW for consideration on 20 July; however, at the level of the Committee of Experts (CoE). In addition, the session initially scheduled for 28 July to consider the 'AU Commission Report on Elections in Africa conducted from January to June 2026,' was moved forward to 22 July.

The second revision, on the other hand, saw the session on 'Update on the Continental Logistics Base operations,' which was scheduled for 24 July, at the level of the Military Staff Committee (MSC), being moved forward to 20 July. In addition, on 24 July, as earlier mentioned, an agenda item was added which focused on the 'Future of AU's Engagement in Somalia.' Finally, the last revision of the PPoW added an agenda item on 27 July, for the Council to consider the outcome of the second meeting of the PSC Sub-Committee on Sanctions, held on 15 July 2026 on 'Engagement on Political and Socio-Economic Developments on Preventive Measures against UCG.'



Percentage of the Thematic to Country-specific issues considered by the PSC in July 2026.

Noteworthy, as of the drafting of this edition of the Monthly Digest, only four communiqués had been released following those PSC engagements, while no outcome document had yet been issued for the session that considered the **'Update on the Situation in Abyei.'**

SITUATION IN ABYEI

The first substantive session of the PSC during the month was convened on 8 July 2026, coming in as its 1353rd meeting dedicated to an 'Update on the Situation in Abyei.' It is worth noting that at the time of the drafting of this segment, the outcome document had not yet been released.



Figure 1: 1353rd Meeting of the PSC on 'Update on the Situation in Abyei,' 8 July 2026. (Source X: [@AUC_PAPS](#))

It is worth recalling that AU's attempt to engage on the situation in Abyei, before this 1353rd session, faced resounding turbulence from a political, security and humanitarian assistance turmoil spectrum. In March 2024, the PSC had [scheduled](#) an informal consultation and a substantive session afterwards to get an update on the situation in the region but did not go ahead as planned due to Sudan's refusal to engage. This further culminated in a communication from the Sudan Embassy in Addis Ababa requesting that the PSC refrain from proceeding with its planned meeting on the situation in Abyei. Before this, however, the PSC had last discussed this file in September 2022, at its [1108th session](#), before the outbreak of the war in Sudan. Our analysis of this session on [Insights on the PSC](#) edition gave an autopsy of the crisis facing the region, recent developments and why the political status of the area is still in limbo.

Efforts to resolve the final status of Abyei remain stalled. Preoccupied with their respective internal challenges, Sudan and South Sudan have struggled to engage in meaningful dialogue. Despite their commitment to reactivate the Joint Political and Security Mechanism (JPSM) and the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee (AJOC) —mandated to facilitate discussions on security issues and provide political and administrative oversight of Abyei, respectively — neither mechanism has convened.

Abyei is an area on the border between South Sudan and the Sudan that has been accorded special administrative status by the 2004 Protocol on the Resolution of the Abyei Conflict in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement that ended Sudan's civil war. Under the terms of the Abyei Protocol, which was part of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), residents of Abyei have been declared, on an interim basis, to be simultaneously citizens of Sudan's West

Kordofan State and South Sudan's Northern Bahr el Ghazal State until Abyei's permanent status is determined through a referendum.

From the [X Post](#) of the AU Commission's Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS) account about the meeting, the PSC received briefings on the current political, security and humanitarian situation of the region from Guang Cong, UNSG Special Envoy to the Horn of Africa, and Maureen Achieng, IGAD representative to the AU. Despite these respective briefings, however, neither of the two concerned states (Sudan and South Sudan) took part in the meeting.

In his introductory remarks, on the other hand, Bankole Adeoye, Commissioner, PAPS, stressed that 'the Abyei question extends beyond localised insecurity and has far-reaching implications for regional peace, stability, and conflict resolution. He called for renewed efforts to preserve Abyei's demilitarised status, revitalise the Joint Oversight Committee, and build on grassroots mediation and traditional dialogue. He further urged the AU, IGAD, and the UN to work together on a clear political roadmap to end the current impasse.'



Figure 2: Guang Cong, UN Secretary-General Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, briefing the PSC during its 1353rd Meeting on the Situation in Abyei.
(Source: X @[AUC_PAPS](#))

Taking note of the deteriorating security and humanitarian situation in Abyei, exacerbated by the spillover of the conflict in Sudan, growing refugee flows and the effects of climate change, the Council called for

stronger protection of civilians and continued international humanitarian support.

It further commended South Sudan and Sudan for their commitment to dialogue on Abyei, urging both sides to pursue a peaceful African-led solution, preserve Abyei's demilitarised status, while demanding the immediate withdrawal of all unauthorised armed groups.

Relevant Previous PSC Decisions

1108th PSC Session [[PSC/PR/COMM.1108 \(2022\)](#)] held on 29 September 2022:

The PSC:

- Nominate a facilitator for the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee (AJOC) and assist AJOC in carrying out its functions in accordance with the Agreement on the Temporary Arrangements on Security and Administration.
- Conduct, in cooperation with the two parties, a thorough analytical study of the recurring root causes and the triggers leading to protractible instability in the Abyei region, including developing an implementation matrix of the PSC decisions on Abyei, and brief the Council to guide further interventions.
- Spearhead the support for the socio-economic development of the Abyei Area through existing mechanisms, including the PCRD; and in the same vein, coordinate AU's engagements with the AU international development institutions to jointly explore a common humanitarian and socio-economic scheme to support the Abyei Area, while the two Governments search for durable peace.
- Decided to undertake a solidarity field mission to the Abyei Area.

Uganda was also praised for its mediation efforts between the Misseriya and Ngok

Dinka communities and commended the traditional chiefs, elders, and the people of the Misseriya and Ngok Dinka communities for their restraint and commitment to peace. The annual Ngok Dinka and Misseriya seasonal pre-migration conference took place from 20 to 23 November 2025 in Noong, Abyei. The annual convergence provided an opportunity for the participants to sign an agreement renewing their commitment to prevent conflict, safeguard livelihoods, and ensure the protection of civilians along migration corridors, while also pledging to strengthen trust between herders and farming communities. The two communities have had long-standing disputes over land ownership, access to water, and grazing areas, which often intensify during seasonal migration.

Council also welcomed the UN's engagement with the governments of Sudan and South Sudan on practical options to sustain the mandate of the JBVMM. It commended the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) TCCs for helping maintain peace and stability in the region. Despite helping maintain peace and stability in the region, however, UNISFA has reported a sharp increase in security incidents over the past six months. Despite Abyei's demilitarised status, the South Sudan People's Defence Forces (SSPDF) and personnel from the South Sudan National Police Service continue to maintain a presence in the area, according to UNISFA. The mission has also reported that the RSF continue to operate in northern Abyei, particularly in Goli, Diffra, and Gibdud. This, compounded by intercommunal violence, the proliferation of illicit weapons and criminal activity, continues to worsen the overall security situation in Abyei.

In its closing, the PSC looked forward to the planned July 2026 meeting of the Joint Political and Security Mechanism, and encouraged Sudan and South Sudan to

continue constructive dialogue, and at the same time decided to undertake a field mission to Abyei to assess the situation and guide future AU support.

Key Actionable Decisions Requiring Follow-up:

The PSC:

- Reiterated its decision to undertake a field visit to Abyei.

Recent Relevant Amani Africa Publications

- [Briefing on the Situation in Abyei, Insights on the PSC](#), 6 July 2026.
- The Last Serious African Mediation?
- [Reflections on and lessons from the AUHIP Experience and the Meaning of African Political Agency](#), *Ideas Indaba*, 2 June 2026.
- [Briefing on the Situation in Abyei, Insights on the PSC](#), 11 March 2024.

PSC ADOPTS A NEW CONTINENTAL COUNTER-TERRORISM ACTION PLAN WHILE RAISING GRAVE CONCERN OVER DECLINING INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT TO AFRICAN PEACE SUPPORT OPERATIONS

On 21 July, the PSC held its 1354th ministerial-level meeting on 'Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism in Africa.'¹ The session took place against the backdrop of continuing deterioration in several theatres. Only a day earlier, the AUC Chairperson had [condemned](#) terrorist attacks in Niger and Mali carried out on 17 and 18 July, underscoring the sustained

¹ The PSC received opening remarks from Haruna Kyeyune Kasolo, Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uganda and Chairperson of the PSC for July 2026. Bankole Adeoye, Commissioner for PAPS also made a briefing, followed by a statement from the representative of the UN.

operational pressure confronting states in the Central Sahel.



Figure 3: PSC 1354th session, 'Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism in Africa,' 21 July 2026.
(Source: X [@UNOAU](#) / [@MFAEthiopia](#))

The [communiqué](#) adopted as the outcome of the session provides a wide-ranging assessment of the evolving threat and sets out an extensive list of institutional, operational and policy measures. It expresses concern over the expansion of terrorist groups across the Sahel, Lake Chad Basin, Horn of Africa, Great Lakes region and parts of Southern Africa, while highlighting their growing sophistication, including IEDs, drones, assaults on military installations and urban centres, and exploitation of digital technologies.

Several consequential decisions are also observed from this 1354th PSC meeting outcome. Most notably, the PSC adopted the [African Union Continental Strategic Plan of Action on Countering Terrorism in Africa \(2026–2030\)](#). It called for wide dissemination and urged Member States and RECs/RMs to develop national and regional implementation plans backed by monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. The adoption culminates a multi-year effort to update the AU framework: the [1182nd](#) and [1237th](#) meetings called for a comprehensive continental plan, while the [11th](#) Oran High-Level Seminar called on the AUCTC, AFRIPOL and CISSA to work towards its development and the [12th](#) urged the Commission to expedite the process and submit the Plan, following validation, for adoption. The February 2026 [Assembly decision](#) [Assembly/

AU/Dec.978(XXXIX)] further requested the Commission to finalise the Plan and submit it for consideration and adoption following established AU procedures. By May 2026, the draft had reached the PSC Sub-Committee on Counter-Terrorism. The session therefore marks a shift from repeated calls and institutional preparation to a PSC-adopted continental framework, reinforcing Amani Africa's assessment in its [insights](#) on the PSC dedicated to the session. that 'the gap lies in implementation, coordination, institutional follow-through.' Yet financing is left to due process through relevant AU policy organs, without details on prioritisation or adequate funding.

The Strategic Plan is intended to be more than a formal update of the AU counter-terrorism framework, with the communiqué linking its adoption to national and regional implementation plans and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. The central implementation question is therefore whether Member States and RECs/RMs translate the Plan into national and regional measures, with clear responsibilities, monitoring and financing, rather than allowing its adoption to add another layer of commitments without sustained execution. The Strategic Plan is itself candid about this implementation risk, noting from the experience of previous continental instruments that 'implementation has been constrained by under-funding, weak follow-up and reporting, limited Member State ownership, and gaps in coordination among continental and regional bodies.'

The communiqué devotes substantial attention to the convergence between 'terrorism and transnational organised crime'. It identifies arms, drugs and human trafficking, illicit natural-resource exploitation and illicit financial flows as sources of sustainable financing and logistical support. It also urges Member States to deprive

terrorist organisations of all forms of funding and support, including ransom payments, while calling for international cooperation to ensure that national territories are not used to prepare, finance or organise attacks against other states. It is useful in this context to recall that, at its [1345th](#) meeting, the PSC warned of an ‘integrated, hybrid and transnational criminal ecosystem’ in which terrorism, trafficking, environmental crime, cybercrime and financial crime share corridors, financing mechanisms and operational logistics. Against this background, the present session’s decisions on the African Arrest Warrant, the AU Data Bank and the AUCTC–CISSA financing study could help address jurisdictional and information gaps. Their effectiveness will, however, depend on reliable evidence, mutual legal assistance, data-protection safeguards and political willingness to investigate, prosecute and hold accountable both perpetrators and actors benefiting from illicit economies.

Another major feature is the response to the technological adaptation of terrorist groups. The PSC called for counter-IED technologies, training and joint task forces against the terrorist use of drones, while appealing to technology companies and financial institutions to disrupt misuse of digital platforms for recruitment, propaganda, financing and coordination. It further requested a continental framework on emerging technologies including ‘drones, encrypted platforms, and digital finance’, guidelines on artificial intelligence for predictive analysis, early warning and detection of extremist content, and continental scaling of the AUCTC cybersecurity capability programme. The framework is to build on the [Algeria Guiding Principles](#) and align with international standards. These measures are significant, but the communiqué does not spell out modalities for public–private information-sharing or respective responsibilities. Its

broader requirement that counter-terrorism measures comply with international humanitarian, human-rights and refugee law is therefore an important safeguard for surveillance, AI and predictive tools. Ethiopia’s [intervention](#) similarly underscored terrorist exploitation of digital platforms and social media for recruitment, propaganda and extremist narratives, while highlighting Ethiopia’s domestic and regional counter-terrorism role.

The session also gives greater weight to prevention and the social and political conditions enabling recruitment. It reaffirmed a ‘whole of government and whole of society approach’, calling for targeted strategies for youth, women and vulnerable communities through education, socioeconomic empowerment, community engagement and counter-narratives, while welcoming the incorporation of deradicalisation and countering extremist ideologies into the AU Comprehensive Plan of Action. The Council notably stressed prevention even in countries not yet directly affected and called for radicalisation and violent-extremism indicators to be integrated into the Continental Early Warning System alongside multi-hazard early warning systems. This anticipatory approach could strengthen preventive action if translated into usable thresholds and timely responses. The Chair similarly [stressed](#) a multidimensional response combining regional cooperation and cross-border intelligence-sharing with capable institutions, socioeconomic empowerment and disruption of terrorism financing and transnational organised crime. The communiqué also called for mapping and integration of NGOs and civil-society organisations into continental security frameworks ‘with a view to their regulation,’ alongside responsible media reporting and stronger public communication. Civil society and the media can contribute local knowledge, prevention networks and

public trust; regulation should therefore not constrain independent civic activity or media scrutiny, both of which remain important for exposing abuses and assessing counter-terrorism performance.

Despite this stronger emphasis on prevention and root causes, the communiqué's concrete operational prescriptions remain weighted towards security, enforcement and institutional responses. It advocates professional armies and security forces, enhanced intelligence-sharing, coordinated border management, police cooperation, extradition arrangements and stronger national legal frameworks. These measures are important but unlikely to be sufficient in isolation. The accompanying [report](#) identifies an 'overreliance on kinetic action that has not delivered the expected decisive results' and a political disconnect between technical early warning and timely operational action. Amani Africa's pre-session insight, drawing on UNDP's [study](#), highlighted that recruitment in sub-Saharan Africa reflects socioeconomic deprivation, exclusion, grievances towards the state and abuses by security institutions, rather than religious motivation alone.

These findings are consistent with Amani Africa's earlier [special research report](#), which cautioned against excessive reliance on militarised responses while governance, political and developmental conditions sustaining extremist mobilisation receive insufficient attention. A sustainable response therefore requires security measures to be matched by legitimate and accountable governance, socioeconomic opportunity and community resilience. Although the communiqué recognises root causes and civilian harm, it gives comparatively limited attention to legitimate local governance, basic service delivery and accountability, and offers few concrete measures for translating concern over civilian harm into strengthened civilian protection, particularly

in marginalised border areas.

Institutionally, the operationalisation of the PSC Sub-Committee on Counter-Terrorism could strengthen sustained political oversight and follow-up on Council decisions, while the requested revision of the AUCTC Statute and Structure could consolidate its mandate, staffing and resources. The PSC also requested regular AUCTC briefings, greater coherence between AU institutions and RECs/RMs, and cooperation among centres of excellence in training, research and data analysis. These measures could reduce fragmentation if accompanied by a clear division of labour among the AUCTC, AFRIPOL, CISSA, the PSC Sub-Committee, RECs/RMs and national institutions; without coordinated reporting, the breadth of responsibilities risks dispersing institutional effort. The requested finalisation of AUCTC–CISSA field research into terrorism-financing 'sources, channels, enablers, and local collaborators' could further strengthen the evidence base for follow-up.

The communiqué also situates counter-terrorism within deteriorating international cooperation. It expresses grave concern over the 'withdrawal of technical and financial support' to African peace support operations amid shifting national policies and geopolitical fragmentation. It also calls for renewed support for the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and urgent implementation of UN Security Council resolution 2719 (2023). In addition, it urges partners to prevent arms and ammunition produced in their territories from reaching non-state actors and illegal armed groups. The accompanying report is more explicit about the regional consequences, warning that Sahel fragmentation can 'undermine multilateral cohesion and disrupt intelligence flows' and has also 'created a security void in regional cooperation.' Yet the communiqué offers limited guidance on reconciling divided

regional and international approaches, particularly in the Sahel. Ethiopia, pointing to wider global shifts, stressed operationalising the African Standby Force and strengthening continental normative frameworks to deepen intra-African cooperation on security and governance. The Chair similarly called for sustained support for African-led peace operations and implementation of resolution 2719, while presenting the 2026–2030 Strategic Plan as a central continental framework around which these strands should be organised.

Finally, the communiqué reaffirms AU normative instruments and calls for outstanding signatures and ratifications. Ratification alone, however, will not address implementation deficits. More consequential would be systematic reporting on domestication, national legislation, investigation and prosecution, financing controls, human-rights compliance and implementation of national and regional action plans. The Council's call for concrete recommendations for inclusion in the UN Secretary-General's forthcoming report on AU–UN counter-terrorism cooperation offers an opportunity to articulate the experiences, priorities and aspirations of AU Member States more clearly, potentially including predictable financing, support for AU-led operations, technology transfer, capacity-building and greater attention to the governance and development dimensions of terrorism.

Key Actionable Decisions Requiring Follow-up:

The PSC:

- Requested the AU Commission, through the AUCTC, to provide sustained technical assistance and guidance to Member States and RECs/RMs in translating early-warning, strategic and preventive measures into effective implementation.
- Requested Member States to enhance

bilateral, regional, continental and multilateral cooperation through institutionalised intelligence-sharing and information-exchange mechanisms to improve early warning systems, threat detection, and coordinated border management, as well as mutual legal assistance in investigation and prosecution of terrorists and police collaboration and extradition, while simultaneously strengthening national counter-terrorism legal frameworks, utilising multi-hazard early warning systems and mobilising necessary funding.

- Directed the AU Commission to fully support the continental scaling of institutionalising the Continental Cybersecurity Capability Programme to protect information communication technologies (ICTs) from terrorist exploitation.
- Requested the AU Commission to develop continental guidelines on the use of artificial intelligence in the prevention of, and fight against terrorism, including for predictive analysis, early warning and the detection of extremist content.
- Requested the AU Commission to provide the necessary support for the finalisation of the AUCTC–CISSA continental field research on terrorism financing and ensure its urgent submission to the PSC for adoption.
- Requested the AU Commission to urgently finalise the African Arrest Warrant and the AU Data Bank of terrorist groups and individuals supporting or facilitating the activities of terrorist groups/organisations to further enhance judicial cooperation, cut terrorist lifelines and deny safe havens to terrorist actors who exploit jurisdictional gaps across borders.
- Requested the AU Commission, through the AUCTC, to continue monitoring the evolving terrorism trends and dynamics across the continent and to provide regular briefing reports to the PSC, while

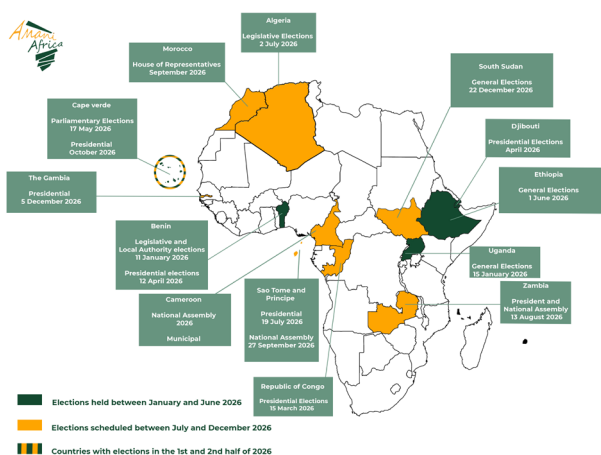
ensuring coherence, complementarity, and effectiveness between AU institutions and RECs/RMs.

Recent Relevant Amani Africa Publications

- [Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism in Africa](#), *Insights on the PSC*, 20 July 2026.
- [Deradicalisation as Leverage for the Fight Against Violent Extremism in Africa](#), *Insights on the PSC*, 18 March 2025.
- [The Growing Threat of Terrorism in Africa: A Product of Misdiagnosis and Faulty Policy Response?](#) *Special Research Report*, May 2022.

PSC SPOTLIGHTS THE IMPACT OF AI ON ELECTIONS

On 22 July, at its 1355th session, the PSC considered the Report of the Chairperson of the AU Commission on Elections in Africa for January - June 2026. As in previous sessions, the PSC adopted the report, congratulated the Member States that held elections during the reporting period (Benin, Cabo Verde, the Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Ethiopia and Uganda) and encouraged them to implement the recommendations of AU Election Observation Missions (AUEOMs).



Map 1: African election calendar 2026.

Although much of the [communiqué](#) adopted at the session follows an established template, it contains two key new elements.

The first is the PSC's request that the AU Commission submit reports from pre- and post-election assessment missions. This could strengthen the AU's electoral engagement by moving it beyond election-day observation. Timely reporting and consideration would enable the PSC to assess electoral preparedness, identify conditions that may undermine credible elections and determine what support Member States require. It would also allow the Council to act earlier, including through preventive diplomacy when warning signs of electoral tension emerge.

Post-election assessments are equally important. They would enable the PSC to remain engaged after voting ends, monitor the implementation of AUEOM recommendations and support longer-term electoral reform and democratisation. As highlighted in our recent [policy brief](#), election observation should be linked to structured post-election political engagement with election management bodies, opposition parties and civil society. Such engagement can turn mission recommendations into concrete reforms. The AU Commission has previously experimented with this approach. In November 2021, it organised the first 'return visit' by an election observation mission when former Sierra Leonean President Ernest Bai Koroma returned to Zambia to engage national authorities and stakeholders on the findings and recommendations arising from that year's highly contested election. The initiative was promising but did not become an established practice.

The value of pre-election assessment is particularly evident in South Sudan. At its [1219th](#) session, the PSC directed the AU Commission to deploy observers four months before the country's planned elections and to brief the Council before and after the mission. Following up on this decision, the Commission deployed a Pre-Election and

Needs Assessment Mission to South Sudan on 24 August 2026, led by former Nigerian Foreign Minister Geoffrey Onyeama. On 26 August, during the PSC's 1365th session, Onyeama briefed the Council on the outcome of his political and electoral preparedness engagements. Against this background, the request for reporting on pre- and post-election assessments is an encouraging step. If implemented consistently, it could support more substantive PSC deliberations and a more proactive AU role in promoting credible elections.

The second notable element is the PSC's focus on artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies. The Council adopted three important decisions in this regard. It requested the Commission to: scale up support to strengthen the institutional, operational and technical capacity of election management bodies; take necessary measures on the basis of a dedicated action plan and to report at its next session on elections; and develop continental guidelines on the use of AI in electoral processes, including deepfakes, digital political advertising and the protection of information integrity. These are important decisions and a timely intervention, but AI should not be framed solely as a threat to electoral integrity. Its impact is multifaceted, offering both opportunities and risks.

AI can strengthen elections by improving voter registration, facilitating voter education and civic engagement, detecting irregularities and supporting more efficient electoral administration. These benefits, however, depend on adequate investment, technical expertise, transparent systems and effective oversight.

The risks are equally significant, especially when AI is embedded in electoral administration, including procurement, biometric voter-verification systems and

data-sharing arrangements. In contexts marked by limited digital literacy and weak regulatory safeguards, AI can enable deepfakes, voice cloning, targeted disinformation and manipulative political campaigns. Algorithmic bias, inaccurate outputs and technical failures may also exclude voters or undermine confidence in election results.

Meanwhile, concern about AI-enabled disinformation must not become a pretext for shutting down the internet during elections. Some Member States justify connectivity restrictions as necessary to curb hate speech, misinformation and incitement. In practice, however, such measures may restrict fundamental rights and undermine electoral integrity.

Key Actionable Decisions Requiring Follow-up:

The PSC requested the AU Commission to undertake the following:

- Submit to Council the reports of pre- and post-election assessment missions to enable the PSC to take appropriate decisions to facilitate the successful organisation of credible elections in Member States.
- Continue to provide election-related technical capacity building support to all Member States, paying particular attention to those that are currently in political transition.
- Scale up support to Member States to further strengthen institutional, operational, and technical capacities of Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs), with a view to enhancing professional, independent, and resilient electoral management systems, particularly in view of the growing threat being posed by unethical use of Artificial Intelligence, which is undermining the integrity and credibility of election processes.

- Take necessary measures to address the emerging challenges relating to Artificial Intelligence, the use of new technologies in electoral processes in the Continent, on the basis of a dedicated action plan, and to report to the PSC at its next meeting on this thematic subject.
- Develop Continental guidelines on the use of Artificial Intelligence in electoral processes, including on deep-fakes, digital political advertising and the protection of information integrity.

Recent Relevant Amani Africa Publications

- [Consideration of the Half-Year Report of the Chairperson of the AU Commission on Elections in Africa for the Period January-June 2026, Insights on the PSC](#), 21 July 2026.
- [African Union's Role in Elections in Africa: Promoting Democracy or White-washing Illegitimacy? Policy Brief, Amani Africa](#), May 2026.

PSC SEEKS TO RECALIBRATE ITS ENGAGEMENT WITH BURKINA FASO AND NIGER AMID DEEPENING SECURITY DIVERGENCE

On 27 July, PSC, at its 1356th session, considered an 'Update on the political transitions in Burkina Faso and Niger.'² The session came against the backdrop of a rapidly evolving political and security landscape in the two countries, marked by the persistence and geographic expansion of terrorist violence.

² The session featured a briefing by Mamadou Tangara, High Representative/Special Representative of the Chairperson of the Commission for Mali and the Sahel and Head of the AU Mission in the Sahel (MISAHEL).



Figure 4: PSC 1356th Meeting on the 'Update on the Political Transition in Burkina Faso and Niger,' 27 July 2026. (Source: X @AUC_PAPS)

The first major element highlighted in the [communiqué](#) adopted by the session is the persistent threat of violent extremism and terrorism. The PSC expressed 'deep concern over the widespread terrorism and violent extremism in the central Sahel' and explicitly condemned recent high-profile complex attacks, including operations against military posts in Burkina Faso and the assault on Diori Hamani International Airport in Niamey, Niger.

In addressing this security landscape, the PSC reiterated that 'military responses alone are insufficient.' It underscored the necessity of an integrated African-led strategy combining counter-terrorism operations with good governance, climate resilience, inclusive development, and community stabilisation. To operationalise this, the PSC called for the full implementation of the Continental Strategic Plan of Action on Countering Terrorism in Africa (2026 - 2030) adopted at its [1354th session](#), while urging enhanced support for national security institutions through the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS), the African Standby Force (ASF), and the Nouakchott Process. Although the call for the utilisation of these instruments is potentially important, its value will depend on whether these instruments are connected to an operational strategy for the Central Sahel.

The communiqué also reflects a notable effort to move beyond an exclusively political framing of the two situations. While reaffirming the AU's zero-tolerance position on unconstitutional changes of government

and calling for the expeditious restoration of constitutional order, the Council simultaneously recognised the severity of the security crisis and the need to address the political, security, humanitarian and socio-economic dimensions of the situation in an integrated manner. This represents an important evolution in the framing of the two transitions. Earlier PSC responses have tended to place restoration of constitutional order at the centre of the AU's engagement with countries under military rule, sometimes without sufficiently addressing the security conditions that have contributed to the erosion of state authority. The experience of Mali, where the PSC's response to large-scale terrorist attacks continued to place considerable emphasis on restoration of constitutional order without sufficiently prioritising stabilisation and restoration of state authority, illustrates the limitations of pursuing these objectives without adequate sequencing.

The 1356th communiqué appears to recognise the importance of sequenced prioritisation in addressing the political transitions in Burkina Faso and Niger, situating them within the broader context of the ongoing security crisis. The Council's condemnation of the recent attacks on military installations, together with its call for implementation of the Continental Strategic Plan of Action on Countering Terrorism, indicates a recognition that the deterioration of security is not simply a parallel challenge to the political transition but one of the central factors shaping the trajectory of the two countries.

At the same time, the communiqué reveals an important tension in the AU's approach to the political transitions. The Council calls for the 'expeditious restoration of constitutional order' while at the same time acknowledging the progress made by the transitional authorities and committing to continued 'constructive engagement.' However, the

political context in both countries has changed considerably since the coups. In Burkina Faso, the transition has already been extended until 2029, while in Niger the 2025 Charter of Refoundation established a five-year, potentially adjustable transition period. The transitions are consequently no longer short-term arrangements awaiting the rapid restoration of the pre-coup constitutional order.

This raises a question about what the AU means in practical terms by 'expeditious restoration' of constitutional order in the current context. Unlike the earlier phase of the transitions, when the principal policy question was how quickly military authorities could hand power back to civilian institutions, the challenge has now become how to create a credible political pathway capable of producing legitimate and sustainable constitutional arrangements. It also creates an important ambiguity in the AU's position: constructive engagement is presented as the principal modality, but the communiqué does not clarify what leverage or incentives accompany that engagement. The communiqué's call for inclusive national dialogue involving political actors, civil society, women, youth, traditional and religious leaders is therefore potentially more consequential than the general call for a return to constitutional order.

However, the communiqué does not provide sufficient clarity on how such inclusive political processes would be initiated, who would facilitate them, or what concrete benchmarks would be used to assess progress. More fundamentally, it leaves unaddressed whether a genuinely inclusive national dialogue can realistically be convened while acute insecurity persists, large swathes of territory remain beyond state control, and ongoing counterinsurgency operations severely restrict civic space and political participation. This represents

a familiar implementation gap in PSC decisions.

The communiqué's formulation on regional cooperation nevertheless points to a potentially meaningful direction. The PSC's decision to welcome the Final Communiqué of the 69th ECOWAS Summit and simultaneously call for cooperation with the Central Sahelian States suggests an attempt to avoid treating the AU–ECOWAS relationship and the AES as mutually exclusive political spaces. However, the communiqué does not explain how such cooperation is to be organised. In the absence of a clearly defined mechanism bringing together the AU, ECOWAS, AES and relevant national security structures. This is particularly important because the PSC has previously identified concrete mechanisms for strengthening AU engagement in the Sahel. Its 2025 ministerial session called for the establishment of a Task Force to support the Sahel countries in addressing terrorism and the security, socio-economic and humanitarian dimensions of the crisis. Additionally, during the previous consultations between the PSC and the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council (MSC), agreement was made 'to sustain engagement with the AES countries and to develop a security cooperation framework involving the AU and ECOWAS for engagement with the three countries' to more effectively address insecurity.

Relevant Previous PSC Decisions:

1354th PSC Session [[PSC/PR/COMM.1354 \(2026\)](#)] held on 21 July 2026:

The PSC:

- Decided to establish a Task Force to support the countries of the Sahel in fighting against terrorism and, in this regard, directs the Chairperson of the Commission to establish the Task Force for the Sahel addressing security, socio-economic and humanitarian chal-

lenges in the region, including addressing terrorism and violent extremism.

[Joint Communiqué](#) of the 2nd Annual Joint Consultative Meeting Between the PSC and the Mediation and Security Council of ECOWAS

The two Councils:

- Agreed to develop a security cooperation framework involving the AU and ECOWAS engagement with Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, in order to more effectively address insecurity in the West African Region

Another significant development in the engagement of the AU is the emphasis on high-level political engagement. The Council welcomed the Chairperson of the AU Commission's visit to Mali and Burkina Faso and requested continued engagement with Niger. This indicates an attempt to strengthen the political visibility of the AU after a period in which relations between the Union and the Sahelian military authorities have been characterised by limited engagement. The importance of this engagement should not be underestimated. The experience of the Sahel demonstrates that the AU's formal normative authority alone has limited influence when it is not accompanied by political presence, sustained dialogue and confidence-building.

The strengthening of the AU Liaison Office in Mali, which the communiqué presents as a means of ensuring a stronger AU presence in the Sahel, is therefore potentially one of the most practical elements of the decision. A stronger field presence could help address one of the persistent weaknesses in AU engagement: the distance between decisions adopted in Addis Ababa and political and security dynamics unfolding on the ground. However, the effectiveness of such a presence will depend on whether it is equipped with sufficient political authority,

analytical capacity, strategic propositions and resources to engage not only with governments but also with local actors and regional mechanisms.

The communiqué also links political transition with state-building and development. The request for the AU's Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development Centre to develop projects focused on women and youth, together with the call for AFSIT, the African Development Bank and regional financial institutions to support economic recovery, youth employment and basic services is relevant given the extent to which poverty, unemployment, weak state presence, climate pressures and lack of services in marginalised border communities create vulnerabilities that armed groups can exploit. The breadth of these institutional references demonstrates the range of instruments available to the AU, but it also risks reproducing a familiar problem: a wide array of institutions and initiatives without a clearly defined operational architecture.

The key test for the AU's engagement with Burkina Faso and Niger will therefore be whether constructive engagement can be converted into strategic engagement, one that preserves the AU's normative commitment to constitutional order while recognising the transformed political realities of the Central Sahel, addresses the security crisis as a first-order concern, and establishes a credible pathway toward inclusive political settlements. The objective should not be to choose between security and constitutionalism, but to develop a sequencing in which stabilisation, restoration of state authority, inclusive political dialogue and institutional reform reinforce rather than undermine one another.

Key Actionable Decisions Requiring Follow-up:

The PSC requested:

- The AU Commission through the AU PCRD Centre to engage Burkina Faso and Niger and develop development projects in the countries to empower the youth and women.
- The Chairperson of the AU Commission to continue the high-level political engagements, including with the authorities in Niger, through regular consultations and preventive diplomacy initiatives aimed at supporting peaceful, inclusive political transitions, confidence and trust-building and institutional strengthening.
- The AU Commission to continue engaging with Burkina Faso, the Republic of Niger and other Sahelian countries to promote coordinated implementation of continental peace and security initiatives, strengthen co-operation with regional organisations and mobilise international support for African-led stabilisation efforts.
- The AU Commission to continue providing the PSC with periodic reports on the implementation of this Communiqué and on developments relating to the political, security, humanitarian and socio-economic situations in Burkina Faso and the Republic of Niger.

Recent Relevant Amani Africa Publication

- [Update on the Political Transition in Burkina Faso and Niger](#), *Insights on the PSC*, 27 July 2026.

OTHER ACTIVITIES OF THE PSC AND ITS SUBSIDIARY BODIES DURING THE MONTH

3rd Accra Reflection Forum on Unconstitutional Changes of Government

The PSC Chairperson and some members

of the Council participated in the 3rd AU Reflection Forum, held on 3 and 4 July 2026 in Accra, Ghana. This year's theme was 'Youth Inclusion for African stability,' under the patronage of John Dramani Mahama, President of the Republic of Ghana.

The forum aimed to explore the complex interplay between youth engagement and unconstitutional changes of government (UCG), examining both how unresolved governance challenges drive youth disaffection and how young people could catalyse sustainable constitutional solutions. It further aimed to assess the multidimensional impact of UCGs on young people's political participation and socio-economic prospects, and to identify concrete pathways to harness youth agency to strengthen constitutional order and democratic governance across the continent.



Figure 5: 3rd AU Forum on Unconstitutional Changes of Government. (Source: X @AUC_PAPS)

Informal Consultations

During the month, the PSC also engaged in a number of informal consultations, beginning with the 'Proposed AU Model on Trigger Mechanism for Early Warning and Early Action,' which was held on 8 July. This was followed by an Informal Engagement with the Chairperson of the AU Commission on the state of governance, peace and security in Africa. Lastly, still on the same day, another Informal [Consultation](#) was held on 'Funding Support for Somalia/AUSSOM Logistics Package.'



Figure 6: AU Commission Chairperson, Mahmoud Ali Youssouf, addressing the AU PSC's informal consultation on the Future of the AUSSOM. (Source: X @AUC_PAPS)

2nd Policy Conference on the Nexus between 'Peace, Security and Development,' Mombasa, Kenya

The Chairperson of the PSC, accompanied by some members of the Council, participated in the 2nd Policy Conference on the Nexus between Peace, Security and Development, on 11 and 12 July 2026.

The meeting provided a platform for wide-ranging discussions, covering the implementation of the Tangier Declaration, the operationalisation of the nexus through AI-driven and youth-led innovations, and a rethinking of military expenditures alongside development trade-offs in Africa. Discussions also extended to de-risking investments in conflict-affected states, including the role multilateral financial institutions can play in supporting Agenda 2063, as well as supporting complex political transitions by drawing on lessons from the AFSIT. The meeting concluded by addressing a range of cross-cutting policy priorities.



Figure 7: The 2nd Policy Conference on the Nexus between 'Peace, Security and Development,' 11 – 12 July 2026, Mombasa, Kenya. (Source: X @AUC_PAPS)

PSC Chair engagement with PAP in Midrand, South Africa

On 24 July, the PSC Chairperson had an engagement with the Pan-African Parliament in Midrand, South Africa. Its Committee on Justice and Human Rights and the Committee on Cooperation, International Relations and Conflict Resolution convened a joint capacity-building training on the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, facilitated by the AGA Secretariat. The training featured a presentation by Rebecca Amuge Otengo, PSC Chairperson for July 2026 and Chairperson of the African Governance Architecture-African Peace and Security Architecture (AGA-APSA) Platform.

In her presentation, she highlighted, among other things, the complementary roles of the PSC, the AGA-APSA Platform and the Pan-African Parliament in advancing conflict prevention, constitutional governance and the protection of human rights across Africa.



Figure 8: (Front Middle) PSC Chairperson for July 2026, Ambassador Rebecca Otengo, PR of Uganda to the AU, at the Pan-African Parliament for a joint capacity-building training on ACDEG, facilitated by the AGA Secretariat. (Source: X @AfrikParliament)

Committee of Experts (CoE) Meetings

The PSC subsidiary bodies also had engagements during the month. On 14 July, the CoE met for preparations for the PSC Ministerial Meeting on 'Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism in Africa.' On 20 July, another agenda item was added

to the programme, but at the CoE level, to [consider](#) the Proposed AU Model on Trigger Mechanism for Early Warning and Early Action. It is worth recalling that following the informal engagement with the AU Chairperson on 8 July, on a similar theme, the session was added on 20 July to be discussed further at the expert level.



Figure 9: CoE Meeting on the Proposed AU Model on Trigger Mechanisms for Early Warning and Early Action. (Source: X @AUC_PAPS)

Military Staff Committee (MSC) Meetings

The MSC also had engagements during the month. On 24 July, the MSC met for an 'Update on the Continental Logistics Base operations.' The 34th meeting of the MSC was chaired by Brigadier General Edward Ronald Mutaawe, Defence Attache of the Ugandan Embassy in Ethiopia and Chairperson of the MSC for July 2026.



Figure 10: 34th Meeting of the Military Staff Committee on an 'Update on the CLB Operations,' 24 July 2026. (Source: X @AUC_PAPS)

The other MSC meeting was held on 24 July, under the theme of the 'Future of AU's Engagement in Somalia.' The session, called for by the PSOD and Chaired by its Head, Gen. Cheick Dembelé. It brought together representatives of Somalia, AUSSOM TPCCs, MSC, A3 and the UN to exchange views on the future of AU's engagement in Somalia. It formed part of AU's ongoing strategic consultative process to support decision-

making on the future of its engagement in Somalia, and in advance of a Kampala TCCs summit held on 31 July.

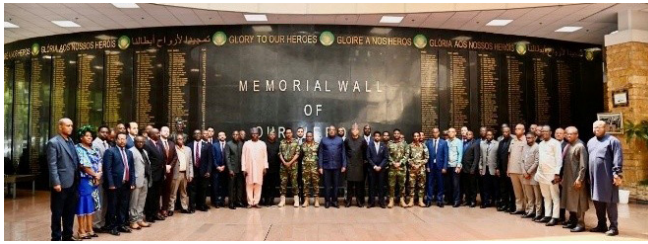


Figure 11: 35th Meeting of the MSC on the 'Future of AU's Engagement in Somalia,' 24 July 2026.
(Source: X @[AUC_PAPS](#))

Sub-Committee on Sanctions Meeting

The sub-committee on sanctions convened on 15 July for its second meeting since its establishment to examine political and socio-economic developments and strengthen preventive measures against UCGs across Africa. Chaired by Michael Wamai of Uganda, and Chair of the AU PSC Sub-Committee on Sanctions for July 2026, the meeting received briefings from Jackson Hamata, Executive Secretary, CISSA, as well as the SRCCs and Heads of AU Liaison Offices for Mali/Sahel, Guinea-Bissau, and Sudan. The presentations provided updates on political developments in countries undergoing transition, shared insights from the ground, and explored practical ways to support political transitions while strengthening preventive measures to reduce the risk of future UCGs across Africa.

The discussions aimed to identify early warning signs and drivers of instability, while developing practical, preventive measures to reduce the risk of UCGs across the continent and strengthen constitutional governance.

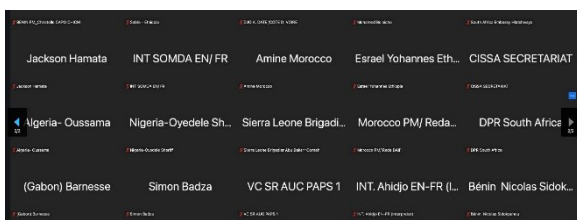


Figure 12: The 2nd Sanctions Subcommittee meeting on 'Engagement on Political and Socio-economic Developments on Preventive Measures against UCG,' 15 July 2026. (Source: @[AUC_PAPS](#))



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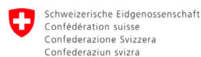
ABOUT AMANI AFRICA

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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