

# **MONTHLY DIGEST ON THE AFRICAN UNION PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL**

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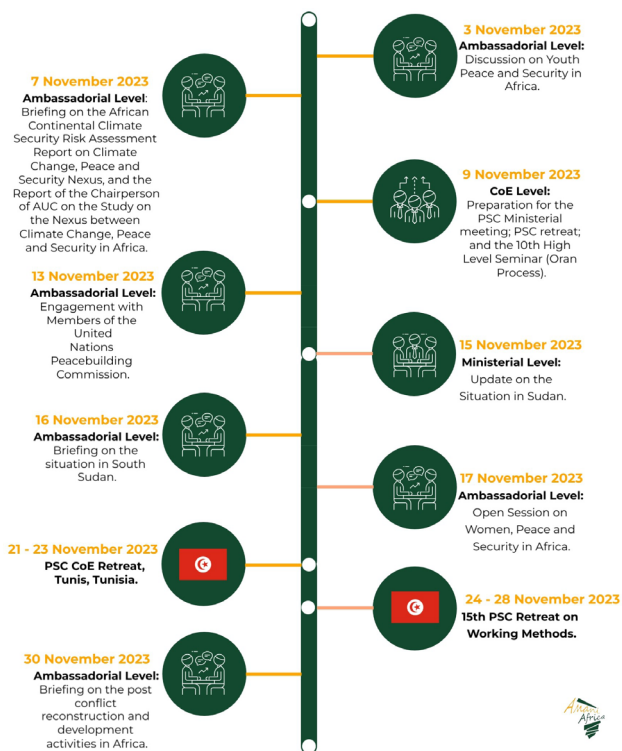
## THE MONTH AT A GLANCE

In November, under the chairship of the Republic of Djibouti, the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC), had a scheduled program of work consisting of seven sessions.

Out of the seven sessions, four focused on thematic issues, two addressed country-specific situations and one was a consultative session of the PSC with the United Nations Peace Building Commission (UNPBS). All the sessions, except one held at the ministerial level, were held at the ambassadorial level.

### Activities of the AU Peace and Security Council

November 2023



All of the initially planned sessions took place during the month except for the two revisions for change of dates. The first revision moved the session on the situation in South Sudan originally scheduled for 14 November to 16 November. The second revision pulled forward the session on Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development Policy Framework session to 29 November from 30 November.

The outcomes of all the meetings were adopted as Communiqué. On average, it took 8 days for the published outcome documents to be released.

## THE PSC CALLS FOR MID-YEAR REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN OF THE CONTINENTAL FRAMEWORK ON YOUTH, PEACE AND SECURITY

The 1183<sup>rd</sup> Session of the PSC held on 3 November 2023 was dedicated to Youth, Peace and Security in Africa. This is the 6<sup>th</sup> session on this theme since the PSC held its first session on this theme. The deliberations highlighted the PSC's increasing recognition of the importance of this theme and largely involved reflections on progress made thus far and further steps required to implement the youth, peace and security agenda meaningfully. This year's session also coincides with and is convened as part of the annual commemoration of Africa Youth Day marked under the theme '**1 million Next Level is Knocking**'. This is also the session where the members of the second cohort of the Africa Youth Ambassadors for Peace (AYAP) whose term is coming to an end delivered a statement on their experiences.<sup>1</sup>

The PSC, in the [Communiqué](#) issued as an outcome of the session, noted 'the legitimate increased demand by African youth for a more significant role in decision-making, as well as inclusion in the political sphere and socio-economic opportunities'. Recognizing the imperative of meeting this demand as a critical measure for ensuring stability, the PSC underscored the need for redoubling efforts by AU member states. In this respect, it called on states to ratify and domesticate the African Youth Charter and to emulate the example of Nigeria, Uganda, Seychelles, Kenya, Liberia and Cameroon 'who have developed or begun development of their respective NAPs on YPS' and develop NAPs with support from AUC and the Youth Envoy. Additionally, the PSC further encouraged Member States to intensify their efforts and allocate necessary resources for the implementation of UNSC Resolutions 2250 (2015), 2419 (2018) and 2535 (2020).

<sup>1</sup> Apart from the members of the AYAP, the Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the Commission on Youth, Chido Cleo Mpemba and the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General and Head of United Nations Office to the AU delivered statements during the session.

‘the legitimate increased demand by African youth for a more significant role in decision-making, as well as inclusion in the political sphere and socio-economic opportunities’.



The 83<sup>rd</sup> session of the PSC, Source: @AU\_PAPS

It also urged Member States and RECs/RMs to implement the African Charter on Children and the aspirations enshrined in Agenda 2040 aimed at fostering an Africa fit for children, as well as the Bujumbura Declaration of April 2022.

## Key Actionable Decisions

The key actionable decision requiring follow up are identified below.

PSC requested:

- Member States to further promote the political participation of young people, including within civil society organizations and political parties, to facilitate greater inclusion in decision-making processes
- youth are intentionally and systematically engaged in mediation, dialogue, reconciliation and other peace processes on the continent, including through co-deployment with seasoned mediators
- the AU Commission to institutionalise the inclusion of the youth, particularly the AYAPs and WiseYouth Network, in preventive diplomacy missions and AU Election Observer Missions
- AU Commission, in collaboration with youth experts, to undertake a comprehensive review on the progress made in the implementation of the Continental Framework for Youth, Peace and Security (CFYPS), the existing gaps and challenges, and concrete recommendations on possible areas for improvement.

## THE PSC REQUESTS THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE REPORT ON CLIMATE AND PEACE AND SECURITY

Prior to COP28, the PSC convened a session on 7 November to consider the African Climate Security Risk Assessment Report and the Report of the Chairperson of the AU Commission on Climate Change, Peace and Security. These documents were presented by Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS) and Dr. Seth Osafo, the Representative of the African Group of Negotiators, on 7 November 2023.

As highlighted in our [analysis of the session](#) (1184<sup>th</sup>), there had been repeated requests for the expedited finalization of the Report of the Chairperson for the study on the nexus between climate change and peace and security in various PSC sessions, indicating that the study on this nexus was long overdue. However, it was during the 1051<sup>st</sup> session of the PSC, held on 26 November 2021, that the African Continental Climate Security Risk Assessment Report was brought up for deliberation.

While the request for the study on the nexus between climate and peace and security originated from the need to analyse the complex relationship between climate change, peace, and security, the relevance of the study African Climate Security Risk Assessment (ACSRA) stems from the need to identify and understand climate-related risks broadly and their potential impacts on peace and security in Africa. Yet, an examination of the study on ACSRA and the executive summary of the Chairperson's report presented to the session show that the subject matter that the two deal with is the same. The PSC was thus right in requesting the AU Commission to finalize and consolidate the two 'in order to develop a comprehensive report to be submitted to the Council for further consideration'.

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## Relevant Previous PSC Decisions

- 774<sup>th</sup> session [\[PSC/PR/BR. \(DCCLXXIV\)\]](#) - the PSC requested the AU Commission to undertake a study on the nexus between climate change and peace and security in the continent.
- 984<sup>th</sup> session [\[PSC/AHG/COMM.1 \(CMLXXXIV\)\]](#) - the PSC expressed its anticipation to receiving the Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the study on the nexus between climate change and peace and security in the Continent.
- 1114<sup>th</sup> Session [\[PSC/MIN/COMM.1114 \(2022\)\]](#) - the PSC reiterated the request for the AU Commission to expedite the finalization of the Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the Study on the Nexus between Climate Change, Peace, and Security in the Continent.
- 1051<sup>st</sup> Session [\[PSC/PR/COMM.1051 \(2021\)\]](#) - the PSC requested the AU Commission to expedite the finalization of a climate-related security risks assessment study, in consultation with Member States.
- 1079<sup>th</sup> session [\[PSC/PR/COMM.1079\(2022\)\]](#) - the PSC Requests the AU Commission to expedite the finalization of the Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the Study on the nexus between Climate Change, Peace and Security.

## Relevant Previous AU Assembly Decisions:


- [\[Assembly/AU/Dec. 815\(XXXV\)\]](#) – The Assembly of Heads of State and Government requested the expedited finalization of the climate-related security risk assessment study, in consultation with Member States as well as to expeditiously develop a Common African Position on the nexus between Climate, Peace and Security.

The risk assessment report forms the foundation both for expounding the chairperson's report regarding the nexus between climate change and peace and security in Africa and for the development of the Common African Position on this subject. Additionally, the report provides analysis of climate-security

risks across Africa, focusing on specific regions as well as transregional phenomena with unique characteristics. Based on the identified risk factors, regional responses, and effective practices, the report also provides recommendations for better managing climate-related security risks across the continent.

In the [Communique](#) adopted on the session, the PSC expressed its concerns regarding the impacts of climate change in Africa, particularly in relation to peace and security. The PSC thus underscored 'the importance of investing in risk prevention and resilience building'. To this end, it envisaged the need for the AU to support 'Member States and the RECs/RMs, in order for them to build the required resilience and to more effectively respond holistically and comprehensively to climate-related security threats.'

The communiqué dealt with various dimensions of financing regarding climate and climate-related security risks. With respect to climate financing in general, it rightly pointed out the need for mobilization of funding to significantly increase climate financing under Africa's special needs and circumstances, particularly for climate change adaptation and resilience building.' It also reiterated the need for mobilizing predictable and sustainable climate financing, including the establishment of an African Climate Fund.' Regarding such African fund, the role of entities such as the African Development Bank and the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) is key. The PSC also called for the rapid operationalization of the 'loss and damage fund', despite not clarifying the link between climate-related risks and the loss and damage fund, which is not security specific. The third aspect of the financing issue addressed by the PSC is 'investment in fund absorption capacities.' The final funding related issue addressed in the communiqué is 'better and easier access to finance.' The Chairperson's executive summary presented during the session illustrated the importance of this and the existing gap noting that 'as of 2020, less than a third of all GEF (Green Climate Fund)-funded projects were implemented in conflict-affected contexts.'

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The PSC also addressed the issue of capacity and institutions. It thus emphasized 'the importance of the AU Commission to strengthen African analysis, research and data collection to provide more contextualized analysis of climate-related security.' It also emphasized the importance of developing and enhancing climate-security capacities and institutions through the exchange of experiences, training, and capacity building at the regional, national, and local levels.

While the communiqué mostly addresses themes previously touched on in earlier PSC sessions, the communiqué enunciates two new elements. The first of these is on the issue of green transition. In this respect, the PSC underscored the need to 'ensure sufficient investment in the green transition' and 'develop local value chains for green technologies to better position Africa in the global transition both in terms of innovation and value chains.' The other relates to the emphasis the communiqué puts on inclusivity. Accordingly, it called for the involvement of 'the most marginalized the in decision-making process from policies to projects' and the engagement of 'the private sector and civil society'.

There were some important aspects of the ACSRA and the executive summary of the Chairperson's report that deserved specific attention in the PSC session and the communiqué but did not receive such attention. For example, one major gap in effective response to climate change related security risks identified in the summary report is the lack of national strategies relating to climate related security risks, despite AU member states having climate change policies and strategies. Additionally, the summary also noted that despite the vulnerability of all regions of the continent to climate related security risks, only some Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs) namely 'IGAD and ECOWAS have dedicated structures and mechanisms'. These gaps should be considered when the PSC discusses enhancing capacities and national and regional resilience.

**There were some important aspects of the ACSRA and the executive summary of the Chairperson's report that deserved specific attention in the PSC session and the communiqué but did not receive such attention.**

Similarly, two cross-cutting factors noted in the ACSRA that exacerbate Africa's vulnerability to climate related security risks did not receive attention in the session and the outcome document. These are the high dependence of African food systems on imports and global markets and governance gaps including with respect to access to and use of natural resources.

**two cross-cutting factors noted in the ACSRA that exacerbate Africa's vulnerability to climate related security risks did not receive attention in the session and the outcome document.**

Finally, also missing comprehensive engagement by the PSC as reflected in the communiqué of the session is the aspect of the ACSRA on the subject of climate justice dealt with under the sub-heading 'no justice, no peace.' This covers issues relating to loss and damage but it also extends beyond it. It additionally covers issues including just transition (elements of it addressed in the communiqué as noted earlier) and environmental sustainability and justice and access to resources and technology for adaptation.

**also missing comprehensive engagement by the PSC as reflected in the communiqué of the session is the aspect of the ACSRA on the subject of climate justice dealt with under the sub-heading 'no justice, no peace.'**

## Key Actionable decisions

The PSC requested the AU Commission:

- to expeditiously finalize and consolidate the Study and the Report of the Chairperson, taking into consideration the contributions from all AU Member States and Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (RECs/RMs), in order to develop a comprehensive report to be submitted to the Council for further consideration;
- to mainstream climate change in all its activities particularly in early warning and prevention of climate change related violent conflicts; and

Since the session, a significant milestone was reached at COP28, marked by the consensus among State Parties to operationalize the loss and damage fund. To this end, pledges were made by countries including the host, the United Arab Emirates, which set the tone

by pledging \$100 million to the fund, prompting follow-up commitments from other developed nations. The envisaged operationalized fund is poised to offer grant-based financing administered by the World Bank, directed towards reconstruction, rehabilitation, and relocation efforts following extreme weather events.

While this agreement stands as a historic achievement, particularly in light of the more than \$400 billion per year estimated economic costs of loss and damage by developing countries, it is also essential to recognize that the operationalization of the fund marks just the initial phase in addressing broader climate challenge threats particularly affecting countries with the least contribution to climate change. Additionally, operationalizing this fund within the existing international financial architecture may not yield the anticipated outcomes in terms of ease of access for African countries, necessitating careful consideration of the reform of the international financial architecture as a whole.

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## THE PSC AND THE UNPBC DECIDED TO ELEVATE THEIR ANNUAL ENGAGEMENT INTO A FORMAL CONSULTATION

On 13 November, the AU Peace and Security Council and the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission (UN PBC) held their 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Informal Consultative Meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The meeting comes a month after the convening between the PSC and UN Peace and Security Councils (UNSC). Although the PSC's engagement with the two UN bodies encompasses varying objectives, there are areas of similarities. As such, this year's session between the UN PBC and the AU PSC primarily resembled that of the previous meeting with the UNSC. The primary focus of this year's informal meeting concentrated on the New Agenda for Peace and its preventative approach to peace and security. During the session, the AU PSC Chair **Abdi Mahmoud**

**Eyb**, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Djibouti provided the opening remark and **Ivan Šimonovic** Permanent Representative of Croatia to the United Nations (UN) and Chair of the UN Peacebuilding Commission, co-hosting the meeting highlighted the need to strengthen the cooperation between the PSC and UNPBC around the New Agenda for Peace and Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD).



Meeting of the PSC and the UNPBC,  
Source: @AUC\_PAPS and @UNPeacebuilding

One of the key outcomes of this session was the formalization of the engagement between the UN PBC and the AU PSC. Accordingly, the AU PSC and UN PBC have agreed to institutionalize this meeting by hosting the Inaugural Annual Joint Consultative Meeting in the upcoming year. Similar to the meeting with the UNSC, the joint consultative meeting with UNPBC would involve one session dedicated to the Ambassadorial engagement and the other to technical expert engagement.

The deliberation on the New Agenda for Peace addressed the need to support national and regional prevention strategies, through among others, the creating a platform that will allow for the sharing of these national strategies and facilitating peer-to-peer learning on prevention plans. Here instead of inventing the wheel, the best approach would be to build on and use the African Peer Review Mechanism's (APRM)

expanded mandate relating to early warning and conflict prevention as a useful platform for promoting national and regional prevention strategies including through the opportunity that APRM presents for peer exchange and learning. The session highlighted the possibility of countries positioning their national prevention strategies ahead of the Summit of the Future in 2024, although this latter point is not reflected in the outcome document. Further, the need for resource mobilization for peacebuilding including financial support for country-specific prevention plans through the diversification of funds was an element that was addressed during the session. Apart from the use of UN assessed contributions for AU peace support operations (PSOs), the entities identified for mobilizing resources include such as international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the Africa Development Bank. The outcome concerning resource mobilization points to the significance of safeguarding adequate, predictable, and sustained financing for peacebuilding by the utilization of diverse sources of funding including UN-Assessed contributions for Peacebuilding Funds. After the session, the A3 succeeded in securing [the adoption of the draft resolution for financing peace support operations](#) by the UNSC.

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In addition to supporting prevention strategy, an area of collaboration that was covered during the session was the commitment of the PSC and PBC to conduct joint field missions. A case that was made during the session was the possibility for the PSC and UN PBC to conduct a joint mission to Mozambique to visit areas that have seen significant challenges in the region (i.e., Cabo Delgado). Once again, this is not something that is canvassed in the outcome document, hence casting uncertainty about the firmness of the plan for a joint visit to Mozambique.

「In addition to supporting prevention strategy, an area of collaboration that was covered during the session was the commitment of the PSC and PBC to conduct joint field missions.」

## Key Actionable Decisions:

- Institutionalize the holding of the Annual Joint Consultative Meeting between the AU PSC and UN PBC;
- African members of the UN PBC to champion priorities identified and communicated by the AU PSC; and
- AU Observer Mission to the UN to play a facilitating role in coordinating joint actions.

Although this year's sessions heavily focused on the New Agenda for Peace, the session did not neglect to address key areas of collaboration between the AU PSC and UN PBC on the actualization of the Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD). While the PCRD is not a new agenda in the consultations with the PBC, during this consultation a proposal was made to create a joint action plan for the further operationalization of the revised PCRD policy. Although this proposal did not feature in the outcome document, the PSC and UN PBC have indicated their continued commitment to PCRD including collectively identifying strategic and concrete steps leading up to the adoption of the revised AU PCRD Policy; the United Nations Summit of the Future in 2024 and the review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture in 2025.

The upcoming year serves as an opportunity for the two to enhance their engagement through formal engagements. As such, it would be of particular significance for the PSC and UNPBC to reflect on the various thematical engagements they had in the past and ensure the key actionable decisions made in prior years such as on transitional processes in 2021, climate change and peace and security in 2022, and conflict prevention in the context of the New Agenda for peace are taken forward. This can be done by elaborating a joint action plan that lays out how existing and current commitments can be taken forward.

## Previous Meetings and Outcome Documents:

- [5<sup>th</sup> Annual Informal Consultative Meeting between the AU PSC and UN PBC Summary Doc](#)
- [4<sup>th</sup> Annual Informal Consultative Meeting between the AU PSC and UN PBC Summary Doc](#)



## PSC HEARD FROM WOMEN REPRESENTATIVES FROM DRC AND SUDAN ON THE PLIGHT OF WOMEN IN THE TWO CONFLICT SETTINGS

2023 marked the 23<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of [United Nations Security Council Resolution \(UNSCR\) 1325](#) (adopted in 2000) on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) and the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the adoption of the African Union's Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa ([Maputo Protocol](#)). Despite the policy measures taken by AU Member States to domesticate provisions such as the ratification of the Maputo Protocol by over 44 Member States and the adoption of National Action Plans (NAPs) for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 (2000), progress on women's participation in peace processes remains poor.

The PSC dedicated the 1187<sup>th</sup> session to the 23<sup>rd</sup> commemoration of Resolution 1325. The chair of the month, Ambassador Abdi Mahmoud Eybe, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Djibouti to the AU, ceded the chairing of the session to Ambassador Jainaba Jagne, Permanent Representative of the Republic of The Gambia to the AU and incoming chairperson of the PSC, as a symbol of women leadership.

Rather than being the usual general/abstract thematic discussion on Resolution 1325, the session featured women representatives from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Sudan. This afforded the opportunity to hear from the women about the plight of women and other civilians in the ongoing fighting taking place in Sudan and the DRC and the serious protection deficit in these conflict settings particularly for women including from serious forms of sexual violence.

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From the [Communiqué](#) adopted by the session, the Council expressed deep concern over the prevailing insecurity and ongoing armed conflict in the eastern DRC and condemned what it called 'unjustified' fighting in Sudan between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and Rapid Support Forces (RSF). In both Sudan and the DRC, women and girls represent a significant majority of the population affected by the ongoing conflicts. The conflicts in Sudan and DRC show that apart from the violence that they experience together with other affected people, women and girls are additionally subjected to sexual abuse and violence. In this respect, apart from underscoring the need for 'Member States and the international community to redouble their efforts in strengthening the protection of women', the PSC requested the AU Commission to provide support to the countries concerned in developing and implementing rehabilitation programmes for women and girls affected by conflicts, particularly addressing issues of sexual abuse.

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Additionally, on the issue of protection, the PSC highlighted 'the importance for all parties to conflict to respect all universal conventions, especially the International Human Rights Law (IHRL) and International Humanitarian Law (IHL).' As emphasized in our analysis ahead of the session, the imperative of including gender provisions in peace agreements to address women's security in conflict and crisis situations was also underlined by the Council.

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On participation of women in peace processes, the PSC reiterated its call for the effective and meaningful participation of women in peace processes, including in early warning and conflict prevention, mediation and dialogue. Additionally, it emphasized 'the need to appoint women as lead mediators and mediation experts in peace processes to ensure gender parity and the inclusion of gender experts as a norm for mediation teams.'

To address the huge gap in women's leadership and participation in peace processes, the PSC highlighted the need to 'ensure gender parity and create conducive conditions for the meaningful participation of women in all spheres of decision making', which is critical for expanding the pool of women leaders and experts. The PSC also underscored 'the need for the AU Commission, AU Organs, Member States, RECs/RMs, institutions and all other organizations, which are yet to do so, to put in place a quota system to promote gender parity in accordance with relevant normative instruments.' It additionally highlighted the adoption of financial mechanisms, including capacity (building) programs to provide the requisite skills in peace processes, and expansion of space for women and civil society, that facilitate meaningful participation of women.

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With respect to the implementation of Resolution 1325, the PSC noted the need to 'evaluate the achievements made in the implementation of the UNSC Resolution 1325 (2000) on WPS to address the identified challenges and map the way forward.'

## Key Actionable Decisions:

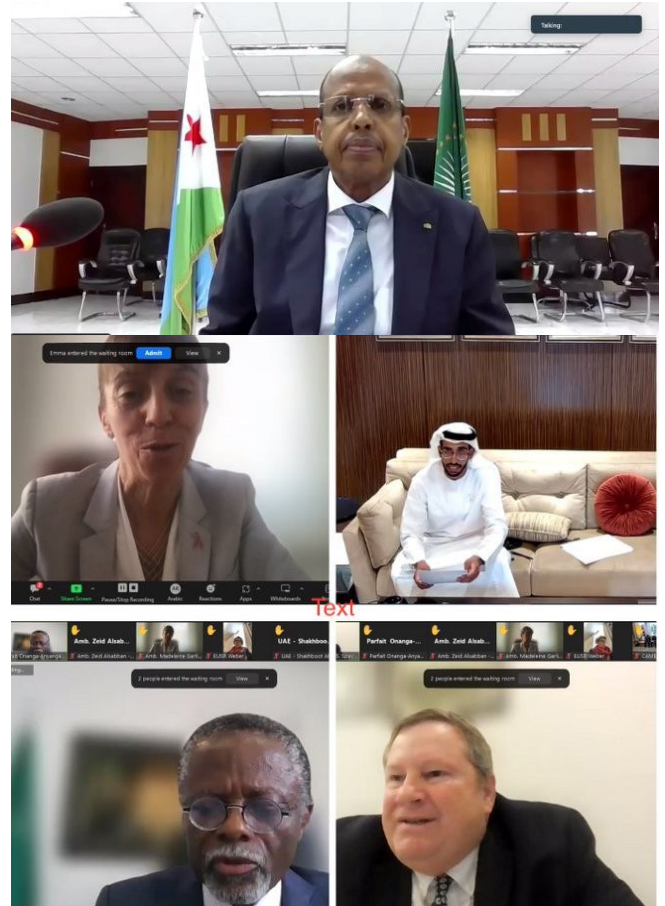
The PSC requested

- The Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the AU Commission on WPS, supported by the AU Commission, to undertake a comprehensive review on the status of involvement of women in peace processes and report back to the Council with recommendations on areas for further improvement.

## THE PSC DECIDED ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A HIGH-LEVEL PANEL FOR SUDAN

The 1185<sup>th</sup> ministerial level session of the PSC on Sudan adopted a landmark decision for the establishment of a high-level panel on Sudan. During the session,

the PSC received briefings from Bankole Adeoye, AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, Mohamed Belaich, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the Commission in Sudan and Workneh Gebeyehu, Executive Secretary of IGAD, who represented IGAD and the AU in the last Jeddah talks. Members of the Core Group on Sudan also delivered statements.



Source: @AUC\_PAPS

During the session, as discussed in fair detail in the [Insight on the PSC](#) published ahead of the session, the deliberation focused on the current state of the conflict, the worsening humanitarian crisis and the state of the efforts for the resolution of the conflict. On the intensifying fighting and the enormous suffering being inflicted on civilians, the PSC expressed its strong condemnation of 'the indiscriminate killings of innocent civilians, wanton destruction of infrastructure, including diplomatic premises, and wholesale looting of civilian homes and property, and the sexual abuse of women and girls, all in violation of international humanitarian and human rights law (sic).' The PSC also expressed its concern about 'the spread of the conflict to parts of the country hitherto spared from the worst form of the conflict.' It thus called on the warring parties 'to immediately and unconditionally ceasefire.'

Noting the 'deterioration of the already dire humanitarian situation in the country,' the PSC expressed 'particular concern at the humanitarian situation in Darfur, Kordofan and Khartoum, as well as in Abyei Administrative Area.' It thus, called upon 'all parties to ensure rapid, safe and unhindered humanitarian access **throughout Sudan**, in accordance with relevant provisions of international law, and in line with the UN guiding principles of humanitarian assistance (emphasis added).' In signalling the challenges that civilians fleeing Sudan are facing when crossing into neighbouring countries seeking asylum, the PSC reminded Sudan's neighbours of their obligations under international and AU laws by underscoring the need for 'continued provision of humanitarian support to Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers, among others by facilitating expeditious and dignified processes, conditions of entry, transit and reception, in line with the provisions of the 1951 Refugee Convention, and the 1969 Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of the Refugee Problems in Africa.' Signalling the inadequacy of humanitarian assistance to Sudanese in need of assistance, the PSC appealed 'to the international community to extend the requisite support towards the refugees and host countries and communities.' According to the Humanitarian Response Dashboard from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Response (OCHA), there is a notable disparity between the 24.7 million individuals requiring humanitarian assistance and the comparatively lower figure of 4.9 million who have received such support during the period spanning from April to November 2023. In terms of humanitarian assistance, it was a missed opportunity that the PSC failed to acknowledge the role that local actors are playing in organizing and providing humanitarian assistance and the need for international humanitarian actors to support and channel their assistance through these local community-based humanitarian actors.

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On the various peace efforts, the PSC, apart from reiterating its call for an unconditional ceasefire, welcomed the Agreement on Humanitarian Access signed on 7 November 2023 in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. The PSC requested 'the Chairperson of the Commission, working in close cooperation with IGAD, to expedite the implementation of the AU Roadmap for the Resolution of the Conflict in Sudan and IGAD Roadmap for Peace in the Republic of Sudan, with a particular view to convening, at the earliest possible date, the two-stage Political Dialogue, including discussions on a comprehensive ceasefire and the establishment of a transitional civilian government.'

While acknowledging that the war in Sudan is fuelled by the meddling of external actors including the support of the UAE to the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), the PSC avoided naming these external actors. Instead, it reiterated 'the need for countries of the region, and beyond, to remain neutral with regard to any military and or financial support to the belligerents.'

Despite the repeated failure of the AU Commission to provide leadership and demonstrate that it cares for the plight of the Sudanese caught up in the crossfire of this brutal war, the PSC continues to emphasize 'the importance of a single, inclusive and coordinated peace process for Sudan, under the auspices of the AU and IGAD, and with the support of the other members of the international community.' Additionally, notwithstanding the fact that the AU delegated participation in the Jeddah process to IGAD, the PSC 'stressed the need to ensure Africa's full and effective participation and involvement in the Jeddah peace process.'

Both the emphasis on a single AU and IGAD-led process and Africa's full participation in the Jeddah peace process make sense in the context of the communique of this session only to the extent that these are to be realized through the proposed high-level panel on Sudan rather than the repeatedly failed mechanism deployed by the Commission thus far. The most significant aspect of the outcome of this session was accordingly the decision of the PSC for the establishment of 'a High-Level Ad hoc Panel on Sudan, that will work with all the Sudanese stakeholders... towards a civilian-led political transition.'

Both the emphasis on a single AU and IGAD-led process and Africa's full participation in the Jeddah peace process make sense in the context of the communique of this session only to the extent that these are to be realized through the proposed high-level panel on Sudan rather than the repeatedly failed mechanism deployed by the Commission thus far.

Whether any of the measures envisaged in the communiqué of this session would see the light of day depends on whether the AU Commission is willing to act on and give effect to that measure. Accordingly, while the decision of the PSC for the establishment of the high-level panel is rightly a welcome move that gives the AU the opportunity to redeem the credibility it lost by AUC's mishandling of the AU's engagement in the Sudan file, it will be of no use if the AU Commission does not act on it and set up the Panel.

## Key Actionable Decisions

The PSC requested the Chairperson of the AU Commission:

- to set up a High-Level Ad hoc Panel on Sudan, that will work with all the Sudanese stakeholders including women and the youth, to ensure an all-inclusive process towards this civilian-led political transition;
- to work closely with IGAD to expedite the implementation of the AU Roadmap for the Resolution of the Conflict in Sudan and IGAD Roadmap for Peace in the Republic of Sudan; and
- host a convening at the earliest possible date for the two-stage Political Dialogue and the discussions on a comprehensive ceasefire and the establishment of a transitional civilian government.

## PSC REAFFIRMS THE NEED TO CONTINUE EFFORTS TOWARDS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE HYBRID COURT FOR SOUTH SUDAN

The 1186<sup>th</sup> session of the PSC held on 16 November was dedicated to receiving a briefing on the situation in South Sudan.<sup>2</sup> The session came as South Sudan marked five years since the signing of the Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) in September, with just 12 months left until the scheduled first democratic elections since its independence. There is significant uncertainty within the international community regarding whether South Sudan will be ready to conduct the elections. During its 1141<sup>st</sup> session, the PSC ruled out any possibility of extending the transition period beyond December 2024. Many observers, including the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), seriously doubt the feasibility of conducting credible elections 'as matters stand.' However, South Sudanese President Salva Kiir has vowed that the elections will proceed as planned.

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<sup>2</sup> The Special Representative of the Chairperson of the AU Commission for South Sudan and Head of AU Liaison Office in Juba, Joram Mukama Biswaro, briefed the PSC. The representatives of South Sudan and the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) delivered statements in their capacity as a concerned state and regional mechanism, respectively. The Interim Chairperson of the Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (RJMEC), Major General (Rtd) Charles Gituai, and the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for South Sudan and Head of the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), Nicholas Haysom also addressed the PSC. In addition, the representatives of members of the AU Adhoc Committee for South Sudan (C-5), namely, South Africa, Algeria, Chad, Nigeria and Rwanda delivered statements.





'...the timelines set out in the Roadmap are behind schedule. With every passing week, the options for practical compromises are diminishing, particularly in relation to the type and scale of the elections, and the constitution making process. The contrasting statements on election preparedness from the parties to the peace agreement indicate that more should be done to achieve consensus on the conditions that need to be in place.'

*Statement by SRSG Nicholas Haysom  
during PSC's 1186<sup>th</sup> session*

The [Communiqué](#) adopted at the session commended recent milestones while expressing concerns over pending issues in the implementation of various aspects of the Revitalized Peace Agreement. One significant stride for South Sudan, and welcomed by the PSC during this session, was the appointment of leadership for the three newly reconstituted elections-related institutions: the National Elections Commission, the National Constitutional Review Commission and the Political Parties Council. As highlighted in the communiqué, the reconstitution of these institutions marks a positive step forward in commencing the critical phase of constitutional and electoral processes. PSC further emphasized the importance of operationalizing these bodies, including through the provision of the necessary resources to enable them to effectively discharge their envisaged mandates. The reconstituted Transitional National Legislative Assembly (TNLA) also passed the controversial National Elections Act 2012 (Amendment Bill) 2023, a move that was later assented into law by the President. Furthermore, the PSC commended the Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity (RTGoNU) for drafting and tabling the Bills on the Commission for Truth, Reconciliation and Healing (CTRH) and the Compensation and Reparation Authority (CRA) to the reconstituted Transitional National Legislative Assembly (TNLA). Nonetheless, there has been no breakthrough in the establishment of the Hybrid Court of South Sudan. Accordingly, the PSC reiterated its call for the RTGoNU to continue collaborating with the Commission to expedite the

court's establishment.

Despite the notable advances made in some areas, the Revitalized Peace Agreement has encountered significant challenges, and the timelines outlined in the Transition Roadmap are behind schedule. Two major challenges have emerged, posing a serious threat to the organization of credible elections in the country.

Despite the notable advances made in some areas, the Revitalized Peace Agreement has encountered significant challenges, and the timelines outlined in the Transition Roadmap are behind schedule. Two major challenges have emerged, posing a serious threat to the organization of credible elections in the country.

The first relates to the slow pace in the implementation of the transitional security arrangements, particularly the delay in the full deployment of the Necessary Unified Forces (NUF) —a critical factor for the protection of civilians and the overall stability of the country. The recent start of the long-overdue deployment of the first batch of 55,000 graduated unified forces is a positive development, but the delay has already slowed down the commencement of the subsequent second batch of the unified forces. NUF is expected to reach 83,000 upon attaining its full strength. Against this background, the 1186<sup>th</sup> session communiqué emphasized the importance of the expedited deployment of the unified forces, as well as the start of the training of the second batch. It is noteworthy that the PSC raised the issue of lifting arms embargoes on South Sudan in connection with the deployment of forces, while critics are pointing to the South Sudanese government's failure to allocate the necessary resources for the training and deployment of unified forces.

The other challenge remains the delay over the making of the Permanent Constitution, a precondition for conducting elections, which need to be finalized six months before the elections.



Two critical pre-conditions are still pending. Firstly, the Revitalised Agreement provides for elections to be conducted under a people-led and people-owned Permanent Constitution, which shall initiate a federal and democratic system of government at the end of the Transitional Period. Secondly, the unification of the forces should have been completed and the forces redeployed to provide elections-related security, among others. The unification of forces faces serious challenges, and yet, it is the most consequential for stability and enduring peace.

*Statement by RJMEC Interim Chairperson  
Amb. Gituai, during PSC's 1186<sup>th</sup> session*

On the humanitarian assistance and reconstruction aspect of the Revitalized Peace Agreement, a major outstanding task highlighted in the communiqué is the establishment of the Special Reconstruction Fund (SRF) and its Board, a necessary step for the AU, IGAD, and UN to proceed with the convening of a pledging conference for South Sudan pursuant to Article 3.2.8 of the Agreement.

### Key actionable decisions requiring follow-up:

The PSC requested:

- The international community to urgently review the punitive measures imposed against South Sudan, including the economic sanctions and arms embargoes;
- The Chairperson of the AU Commission to visit South Sudan and engage various stakeholders to review progress;
- IGAD to convene a Summit focusing on, among others, modalities towards supporting the parties to the RACRSS to overcome challenges in the implementation of the Transition Roadmap;
- The Trilateral Mechanism (AU, IGAD, UN) to jointly report on its work to the PSC in February 2024;
- PSC to undertake a solidarity field mission to

South Sudan during the first quarter of 2024;

- RTGoNU to expedite the establishment of the Board for Special Reconstruction Fund so that the AU Chairperson, UN Secretary-General and IGAD Chair will proceed with the organization of the Pledging Conference.

## PSC REQUESTED SUBMISSION OF THE REVISED AU PCRD POLICY FRAMEWORK TO THE FEBRUARY 2023 AU SUMMIT

PSC's 1188<sup>th</sup> session, held on 29 November, was dedicated to a briefing on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) activities in Africa.<sup>3</sup> The [outcome document](#) of the session, in terms of content, is largely a rehash of previous communiqués on PCRD.

During the session, one of the updates that PSC received pertains to the status of the revision process of the Policy. It is recalled that the 35<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly [[Assembly/AU/Dec. 815\(XXXV\)](#)] and PSC's 1047<sup>th</sup> session requested the revision of the policy in order to ensure that it is re-aligned and adaptable to the emerging challenges in the continental peace and security landscape. As a follow-up to this request, the AU Commission organized two workshops dedicated to the review of the PCRD Policy. The first took place in Accra, Ghana in September, followed by the second in Cairo, Egypt from 30 May to 1 June 2023. The Cairo workshop finalized the review of the Policy, incorporating inputs from Member States. The outcomes of the workshop featured several key recommendations, one of which emphasizes the submission of the revised Policy for consideration during the upcoming 37<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Assembly. Against this background, the PSC, during this session, outlined the next steps for the adoption of the Policy, urging the AU Commission to first submit the draft to the Council, followed by review by the Permanent Representatives Committee, the Executive Council, and ultimately by the 37<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Assembly scheduled for February 2024.

<sup>3</sup> The representatives of the African Union Development Agency-New Partnership for Africa's Development (AUDA-NEPAD); the African Development Bank (AfDB); and the United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU) delivered statements during the session. Egypt, in its capacity as the AU Champion on PCRD, also delivered a statement.

Against this background, the PSC, during this session, outlined the next steps for the adoption of the Policy, urging the AU Commission to first submit the draft to the Council, followed by review by the Permanent Representatives Committee, the Executive Council, and ultimately by the 37th Ordinary Session of the Assembly scheduled for February 2024. ┘

PSC also endorsed the establishment of the Working Group on PCRD, another area of progress made in strengthening AU Peacebuilding Architecture. The Commission launched the Working Group on 15 May, as per the direction given by the PSC at its 1122<sup>nd</sup> session. Co-chaired by PAPS Commissioner, Bankole Adeoye, and AUDA-NEPAD Chief Executive Officer, Nardos Bekele, the Working Group is designed to serve as a framework for enhanced coordination of PCRD efforts. PSC specifically welcomed the inclusion of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) within the Working Group, providing the opportunity to practically implement the peace-security-development nexus.

Co-chaired by PAPS Commissioner, Bankole Adeoye, and AUDA-NEPAD Chief Executive Officer, Nardos Bekele, the Working Group is designed to serve as a framework for enhanced coordination of PCRD efforts. ┘

## Previous PSC decisions pending implementation

During its 1122<sup>nd</sup> session [[PSC/PR/COMM.1122 \(2022\)](#)], held on 28 November 2022, PSC:

- Directed the Commission to establish a Continental Network of National Development and Cooperation Agencies to support the Working Group in implementing PCRD activities and programmes on the continent;
- Underscored the urgent need to reactivate the Council's Sub-Committee on PCRD;
- Tasked the PSC Committee of Experts to urgently work on the terms of reference and time frames for the Sub-Committee on PCRD;
- Directed the Commission to ensure the deployment of long-term AU Technical Support Teams (AUTST) to identified countries under PCRD;
- Encouraged the Commission to expeditiously revitalize the Interdepartmental Task Force on PCRD; and

- Urged the Commission to accelerate the drafting of an AU Policy on Psycho-Social Support to survivors of violent conflicts, particularly women, children and other vulnerable groups.

## Key actionable decisions requiring follow-up:

In this session, the PSC:

- Requested the Commission to expedite the recruitment process for the remaining staff required for the full operationalization of the Centre;
- Encouraged the Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs) to establish a network of PCRD focal points through the I-RECKE platform;
- requested the AU commission to explore innovative approaches that include the use of new technologies, artificial intelligence, digital economy, and E-platforms in exploiting the nexus between peace, security, governance and development;
- Urged the Commission to advocate for a global, integrated, and multidimensional approach based on the nexus between peace, security, and development; and
- Appealed to the Commission for the revitalization of the African Solidarity Initiative.

## OTHER PSC ACTIVITIES DURING THE MONTH

In addition to the sessions, the PSC convened the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Retreat of the PSC on its working methods. The retreat took place from 24 – 28 November in Tunis, Tunisia. Various working methods issues including the need for rationalizing the inclusion of thematic sessions in favour of focusing the program of work of the PSC on conflict-specific agenda items were discussed in Tunis.

The Committee of Experts (CoE) of the PSC also convened for the preparation of the ministerial meeting on Sudan, the PSC retreat and the 10<sup>th</sup> high-level seminar for the Oran Process on 9 November. Additionally, the CoE convened a preparatory meeting for the retreat of the PSC from 21 – 23.



## MEDIA AND RESEARCH SERVICES

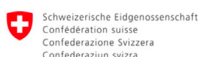
### ABOUT AMANI AFRICA

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Ambasáid na hÉireann  
Embassy of Ireland



Norwegian Ministry  
of Foreign Affairs



### ADDRESS

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