

MONTHLY DIGEST ON THE AFRICAN UNION PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL

AMANI AFRICA

Media and Research Services

September, 2026

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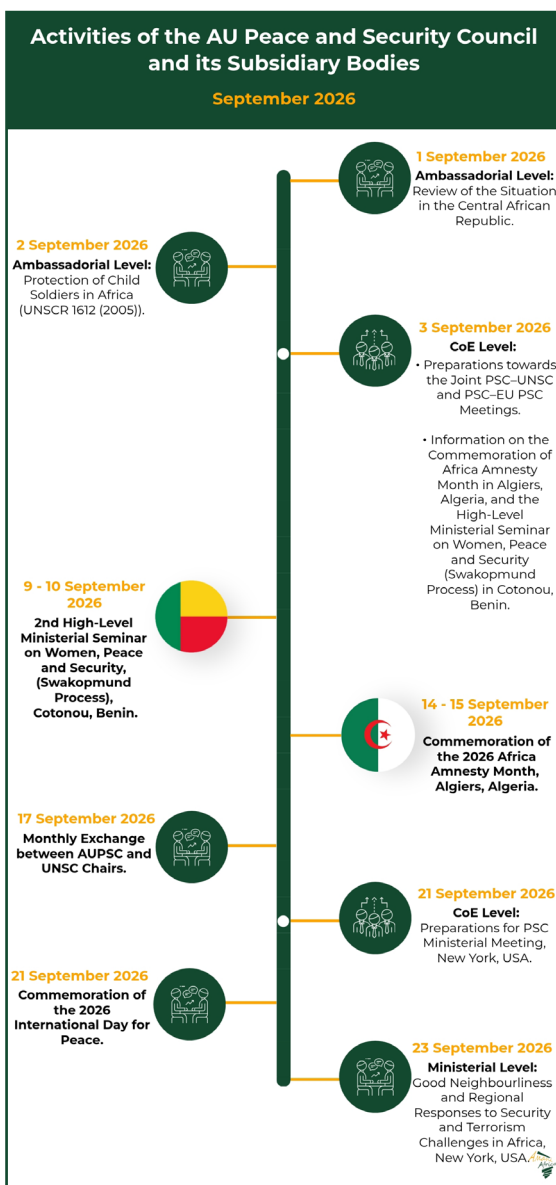
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THE MONTH AT A GLANCE

In September, under the chairship of the Republic of Benin, the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council's (PSC) [Provisional Programme of Work](#) (PPoW) consisted of five substantive sessions, alongside the 2nd Ministerial High-Level Seminar on Women, Peace and Security, and the 2026 Commemoration of Africa Amnesty Month. Following the revision of the PPoW, four substantive sessions were held. Of the four, only one focused on a country-specific issue, while the rest addressed thematic issues. Except for one session, 'Good Neighbourliness and Regional Responses to Security and Terrorism Challenges 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 only one revision. The first change saw the change of dates of the second agenda item of the Committee of Experts (CoE) meeting, which moved the 21 September CoE preparatory meeting for the PSC Ministerial Meeting from 17 September to 3 September. The other change saw the session on 23 September on 'Good Neighbourliness and Regional Responses to Security and Terrorism Challenges in Africa' shift the meeting from the summit to the ministerial level. Finally, an open session on the 'Nexus Between Climate Change, Peace and Security in Africa,' which was planned to happen on 18 September, was postponed to a later date.

The month saw the release of three communiqués, a conclusion and two press releases.

PSC CALLS FOR AU'S ROLE IN PLANNING THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE UN MISSION IN CAR

On 1 September 2026, the Peace and Security Council (PSC) convened its 1367th session to consider the situation in the Central African Republic (CAR).¹

The outcome of the session was a [communiqué](#). In it, the PSC reaffirmed the AU's role as guarantor of the 2019 Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic (PAPR-CAR) and welcomed progress in the implementation of the agreement, SSR, and the disarmament, demobilisation, reintegration and

¹ During the session, statements were made by Sylvie Valérie Baïpo-Témon, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the CAR; a representative of ECCAS; and Parfait Onanga-Anyanga, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General to the AU and Head of the UN Office to the AU (UNOAU).

repatriation (DDR) programme.



Figure 1: 1367th Meeting of the PSC on a 'Briefing on the Situation in the Central African Republic (CAR)'; 1 September 2026. (Source: X [@AUC_PAPS](#))

While progress in the peace process and the conduct of elections represent important milestones, persistent insecurity in parts of the country illustrates the fragility of these gains. The challenge is no longer confined to securing political commitments from armed groups, but also concerns whether these commitments translate into durable disarmament, reintegration and the restoration of state authority. In this respect, the communiqué's call for armed groups outside the peace process to renounce violence and comply with the agreement, alongside its reference to Article 35 on sanctions for non-compliance, reinforces the

Council's established position. However, the effectiveness of this approach will depend on credible monitoring, consistent enforcement and the provision of viable reintegration opportunities to prevent former combatants from returning to armed activity.

Another important dimension of the communiqué is the Council's concern over the implications of a possible drawdown of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA). While progress in the disarmament and demobilisation of combatants provides an important basis for consolidating peace, the sustainability of these gains remains uncertain. According to the UN Secretary-General's report circulated on 13 October, 1,907 combatants were disarmed and demobilised over the preceding year, including 575 since June. However, the report also indicates that implementation of the DDR programme continues to face logistical challenges, adverse weather conditions and attempts by armed-group leaders to renegotiate eligibility requirements and the terms of disarmament. These constraints underscore the fragility of the progress achieved and the importance of ensuring that any transition in MINUSCA's presence does not lead to a vacuum that endangers ongoing peacebuilding and stabilisation efforts.

Building on its 1338th session of 9 April 2026, at which it requested the AU Commission to assess the implications of a potential MINUSCA drawdown and develop a strategy to strengthen the role of the guarantors of the PAPR-CAR towards AU-led stabilisation support, the PSC's 1367th session stressed 'the critical need for active AU involvement and consultation in formulating, planning, and implementing the MINUSCA transition plan'. It also requested the AU Commission to assess UN Security Council Resolution 2719 (2023), in coordination with the A3.

These decisions reflect the Council's recognition that a transition requires more than the transfer of responsibilities: it must be informed by an assessment of national capacities, continuing security threats and the operational requirements for maintaining civilian protection. The June 2026 attack on Am-Dafock, which caused deaths, displaced civilians and injured MINUSCA peacekeepers, illustrates the vulnerability of remote border areas and the risk of security vacuums, particularly amid the spillover from the conflict in Sudan.

The AU Commission's assessment will therefore need to clarify the proposed role of the AU, its relationship with national security institutions and existing international arrangements, and the operational and financial requirements for any stabilisation support. The previous experience of the AU Military Observer Mission in CAR (MOUACA), which was not fully operationalised before its closure, underscores the importance of matching political ambition with the institutional and operational capacity required for implementation.

Relevant Previous Decisions Requiring Follow-up:

1157th session [[PSC/PR/COMM.1157 \(2023\)](#)] held on 13 June 2023:

The PSC:

- Urged the AU Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) 'to urgently identify the long-term peacebuilding and development needs and priorities.'

1221st session [[PSC/PR/COMM.1221 \(2024\)](#)] held on 11 July 2024:

The PSC requested:

- The Chairperson of the AU Commission to take steps to further enhance

the institutional capacity of the AU Liaison Office in CAR.

- The AU Commission to continue providing necessary support for the DDR and SSR programmes in CAR.
- The AU Commission, through the AU PCRD Centre, to urgently conduct a needs assessment in CAR to identify priority areas of need for development and rebuilding.

1302nd session [[PSC/PR/COMM.1302 \(2025\)](#)] held on 19 September 2025:

The PSC requested:

- The Chairperson of the AU Commission to mobilise the necessary resources to enable the Liaison Office to more effectively discharge its mandate.

1338th session [[PSC/PR/COMM.1338 \(2026\)](#)] held on 9 April 2026:

The PSC:

- Directed the AU Commission to undertake a comprehensive study on the impact of the drawdown and possible withdrawal of MINUSCA and to propose concrete recommendations on the way forward, as well as to develop a strategy on strengthening the role of the Guarantors of the PA-PR-CAR, towards an AU-led stabilisation support for CAR and to report to the PSC within two months from the date of the adoption of this communiqué.
- Requested the AU Commission Health, Humanitarian Affairs and Social Development Department to provide the necessary humanitarian support to the CAR.
- Requested the Chairperson of the Commission to provide the AU Liaison Office (AULO) in Bangui with all necessary resources to enable the Of-

to more effectively discharge its mandate.

- Requested the AU LO to provide monthly reports/fact sheets of the political, security and economic situation in CAR to the PSC.

The Council also reiterated the need to extend state authority throughout the country through the deployment of defence forces, restoration of public administration, provision of basic services and dismantling of illegal checkpoints. These measures reflect the recognition that consolidating peace requires more than a security presence. In areas where armed groups remain active and state institutions have limited reach, security gains are unlikely to be sustained without restoring public administration, facilitating economic activity and ensuring that communities experience tangible benefits from the state's presence. Persistent insecurity in Vakaga, Haut-Mbomou and Mbomou, compounded by the cross-border effects of the conflict in Sudan, further highlights the need to link national efforts to restore state authority with regional and international cooperation. In this regard, the Council's call for enhanced 'coordination and complementarity' among the AU, ECCAS, the UN and international partners is important. However, translating this call into effective action will require clearer coordination arrangements and practical benchmarks to assess progress in restoring state authority, and ensuring that security gains are accompanied by improved governance and service delivery.

The session and its outcome further renew the Council's emphasis on the peace–security–development nexus by linking stabilisation to humanitarian assistance, recovery and the restoration of public trust. It calls for support for priority projects under the CAR National Development Plan 2024–2028, requests the AU Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) to develop a dedicated roadmap for practical project support, and encourages

the AU PCRD Centre to deploy quick-impact interventions. These provisions build on previous PSC calls for the identification of CAR's long-term peacebuilding and development priorities. Their significance lies in recognising that security gains will be difficult to sustain without visible improvements in livelihoods, public services and the conditions underpinning local recovery. The communiqué's appeal for urgent humanitarian support and targeted assistance to vulnerable populations further underscores the need to connect immediate relief with longer-term recovery and resilience.

Another notable aspect of the session and its outcome, as captured in the communiqué, is the explicit concern expressed over external interference that undermines CAR's sovereignty, fuels violence and enables the illegal exploitation of natural resources. Recognising the cross-border dimensions of these challenges, the Council called for stronger bilateral and regional cooperation and information-sharing to address insecurity, illicit trafficking and the movement of armed networks. This emphasis reflects the limitations of nationally focused responses to insecurity driven, in part, by transnational networks and the exploitation of resources. However, while the communiqué reaffirms the importance of cooperation, it does not specify the mechanisms through which information-sharing would translate into coordinated action against armed groups, illicit trafficking and resource exploitation. Strengthening cooperation with the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and neighbouring countries will therefore be critical to translating the Council's concern over external interference into a coordinated regional response that reinforces CAR's sovereignty and addresses the cross-border drivers of insecurity.

Key Actionable Decisions Requiring Follow-up:

The PSC:

- Recalled its request for the AU Commission to conduct a comprehensive study on the impact of MINUSCA's drawdown.
- Requested the Commission to assess UN Security Council Resolution 2719 (2023) in coordination with the A3 to explore its activation in support of CAR peace efforts.
- Requested the AU Commission Department of HHS and the PRC Sub-Committee on Refugees, Migrants, and IDPs to extend targeted humanitarian assistance and support.
- Requested AUDA-NEPAD to formulate a dedicated roadmap for practical project support, and encouraged the AU PCRD Centre to deploy quick-impact interventions to rebuild public trust and prevent conflict relapse.
- Reiterated its request to the Chairperson of the AU Commission to prioritise the immediate allocation of financial, technical and staffing resources to fully operationalise the AU Liaison Office in Bangui.

Recent Relevant Amani Africa Publications

- [Briefing on the Situation in the Central African Republic \(CAR\), Insights on the PSC](#), 31 August 2026.
- [Consideration of the Situation in the Central African Republic, Insights on the PSC](#), 8 April 2026.

PSC TACKLES RECRUITMENT OF CHILDREN WITH PEACE PROCESSES, PREVENTION, ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING

On 2 September 2026, the PSC held its 1368th meeting on the 'Protection of Child Soldiers in Africa (UNSCR 1612 (2005)).'² The outcome of the session was a [communiqué](#).



Figure 2: PSC 1368th Meeting on 'Protection of Child Soldiers in Africa (UNSCR 1612 (2005))', 2 September 2026. (Source: X [@AUC_PAPS](#))

The [communiqué](#) of this 1368th meeting generally focused on protecting children from recruitment, use by armed forces and armed groups, and on ensuring their release,

2 *Hervé Djokpe, Permanent Representative of Benin to the AU and Chairperson of the PSC for September 2026 made the opening remarks. A statement was then delivered by Losi Nancy Nonceba, Permanent Representative of South Africa on behalf of Bankole Adeoye, AU Commissioner for Political Affairs to the AU, Peace and Security (PAPS), and Rebecca Amuge Otengo, Permanent Representative of Uganda to the AU, both in their capacities as Co-Chairs of the African Platform on Children Affected by Armed Conflicts (AP-CAAC). Presentations were then made by Jainaba Jagne, AU Special Envoy for Children Affected by Armed Conflict, followed by Robert Daya Nanima, Member of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) and Special Rapporteur on Children in Conflict Situations. Further statements were made by Vanessa Frazier, UN Under Secretary-General and Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict; Laila Omar Gad, UNICEF Representative to the AU and UNECA; Chantal Mutamuriza, AU Lead, Save the Children International Pan Africa Office, representing the Save the Children Pan-Africa and AU Liaison Office in its capacity as Secretariat of the AP-CAAC.*

rehabilitation and reintegration, backed by prevention, accountability and stronger implementation of AU child-protection frameworks. The PSC began by assessing progress on its earlier decisions and welcomed the [implementation matrix](#), which signaled that it wanted measurable follow-through rather than repeated declarations.

Relevant Previous PSC Decisions:

1357th session [[PSC/PR/COMM.1357 \(2026\)](#)] held on 3 August 2026:

The PSC:

- Requested the AU Commission, in coordination with the ACERWC, to organise an advocacy meeting with Member States that have not yet signed or ratified relevant international and continental instruments, including the Safe Schools Declaration and African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child/ACRWC, and the Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, with a view to securing their endorsement, full commitment and implementation, and to report back to the PSC.

1314th session [[PSC/PR/COMM.1314 \(2025\)](#)] held on 21 November 2025:

The PSC:

- Called for the urgent operationalisation and implementation of the Operational Guidance Note (OGN) on Child-Sensitive Early Warning and of integrating child protection indicators within the Continental, regional and national early warning and early response systems.
- Called for the finalisation, adoption and implementation of the Proposed AU Guidelines on Child Protection and Child Participation in Mediation and Peace Processes to ensure that mediation efforts systematically take

into account the rights, needs and voices of children.

- Requested the Chairperson of the Commission to commission a comprehensive study on the nexus between armed conflicts and violations against children, including child marriage.

1290th session [[PSC/PR/COMM.1290.1 \(2025\)](#)] held on 22 July 2025:

The PSC:

- Called for the implementation of the Conclusions of the Banjul Process.

1262nd session [[PSC/PR/COMM.1262 \(2025\)](#)] held on 20 February 2025:

The PSC tasked:

- ACERWC to expedite finalisation of the comprehensive study on child soldiers in Africa for presentation to the Policy Organs for consideration as mandated by the Executive Council Decision [EX.CL/Dec.1248 (XLIV)] adopted at the 44th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council, held on 14 and 15 February 2024, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

1202nd session [[PSC/PR/COMM.1202 \(2024\)](#)] held on 27 February 2024:

The PSC:

- Emphasising the imperative of developing a child-sensitive social protection framework for children in conflict settings to address the underlying causes of vulnerability, requested the AU Commission, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, to develop a Continental Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Framework to address the psychosocial well-being of children in conflict settings, including

those formerly associated with armed forces and armed groups.

1110th session [[PSC/PR/COMM.1110 \(2022\)](#)] held on 5 October 2022:

The PSC:

- Requested the AU Commission to 'undertake a study on the specific impact of terrorism on children and to submit the report of the study for consideration by the Council, as soon as possible.'

1101st session [[PSC/PR/COMM.1101 \(2022\)](#)] held on 18 August 2022:

The PSC:

- Requested the AU Commission to urgently develop guidelines for the participation of children in PSC sessions to ensure systematic engagement.

As these references make clear, PSC sessions on CAAC, as with many other subjects, do not build on previous engagements. As such, they tend to be poorly connected, as the request for various studies before the finalisation and consideration of the study that the PSC called for initially attests.

A central normative position that echoes the PSC's position from this session and its outcome is the reaffirmation of the AU principle of 'children as victims first.' By insisting that children associated with armed forces and groups, including those designated as terrorist organisations, be treated primarily as children in need of protection 'irrespective of the nature of the role they performed or the circumstances of their association' and stressed that, where age is uncertain, the presumption of childhood be applied. The PSC further urged affected Member States to establish or strengthen child-sensitive screening, age-assessment, referral and handover procedures and encouraged those that have

not yet done so to introduce comprehensive amnesty programmes that it help vulnerable children and young people leave armed groups and discourage further recruitment.

The Council also stressed prevention and the integration of child protection into the broader peace and security architecture. It underlined the importance of early action and called on the AU Commission, Member States and RECs/RMs to integrate child-protection risks into national, regional and continental early warning and response systems. It also emphasised that child protection must be built into mediation, ceasefire negotiations and peace processes from the earliest stages.

It also asked the AU Commission and others to ensure that peace agreements expressly prohibit the recruitment and use of children, allow humanitarian and child-protection access, provide for the identification and unconditional release of associated children, and include provisions for their rehabilitation, reintegration and protection from re-recruitment. It also reiterated the need to mainstream child protection into DDR, SSR, and post-conflict reconstruction and development processes, aligning national programmes with relevant AU policies.

The Council also turned to accountability and institutional responsibility. It encouraged Member States to strengthen national legal and accountability frameworks, investigate and prosecute alleged perpetrators in accordance with applicable law, ensure effective command and institutional accountability, and adopt child-sensitive procedures that protect child victims and witnesses. It reminded the AU Commission and Troop and Police Contributing Countries to establish child-protection focal points and to embed the AU Policy on Child Protection in AU Peace Support Operations across doctrine, procedures, training, reporting,

conduct and discipline. The PSC commended Member States that have ratified and are implementing the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, and urged the rest to ratify and domesticate it and translate it into concrete legal, policy and operational measures.

Special attention was given to girls recruited into armed groups. The PSC directed the AU Commission to identify specific measures to support girls associated with armed forces and groups, including girl mothers and survivors of sexual violence. These measures include psychosocial support and efforts to counter the stigma, discrimination and other barriers that keep them from being identified or accessing services and community-based reintegration. It appealed to Member States to protect schools and learning environments and to help conflict-affected children return to and continue their education, encouraging those that have not yet done so to endorse the Safe Schools Declaration.

Previous Relevant PSC Decision:

1262nd session [[PSC/PR/COMM.1262 \(2025\)](#)] of the PSC held on 20 February 2025:

Apart from calling on ACERWC to expedite finalisation of the comprehensive study on child soldiers in Africa, the PSC:

- Welcomed ACERWC's readiness to produce an annual Africa Report on Children in Situations of Conflict and present the report to the PSC on an annual basis.

Originally, Amani Africa proposed such reporting for documenting trends and dynamics in children affected by armed conflicts to ensure that the PSC tailors its engagement according to such needs.

In terms of documentation and reporting, it directed the AU Commission, working with the ACERWC and partners, to strengthen

regular monitoring, analysis and knowledge generation, and reiterated its request that the ACERWC advance its comprehensive study and annual reporting on children in conflict situations. The Commission was also instructed to keep updating the implementation matrix for Communiqué PSC/PR/COMM.1262 (2025), taking into account Communiqué PSC/PR/COMM.1290.1 (2025) and the present decisions, as the basis for periodic progress reports.

Key Actionable Decisions Requiring Follow-up:

The PSC:

- Directed the AU Commission to identify specific measures to support girls associated with armed forces and armed groups, including girl mothers and survivors of sexual violence, as well as children with disabilities and children used in support and other less visible roles.
- Reiterated its request to the ACERWC to advance the comprehensive study and annual reporting on children in situations of conflict and submit it to the Council for consideration.
- Instructed the AU Commission to continue updating and consolidating the implementation matrix for Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.1262 (2025)], taking into account Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.1290.1 (2025)] and the present decision, as the basis for periodic progress reporting to Council.

Recent Relevant Amani Africa Publications

- [Protection of Child Soldiers in Africa \(UNSCR 1612 \(2005\)\)](#), *Insights on the PSC*, 1 September 2026.
- [Education in Conflict Situations](#), *Insights on the PSC*, 2 August 2026.
- [Open Session on Children Affected by Armed Conflicts](#), *Insights on the PSC*, 20 November 2025.
- [Rehabilitation and reintegration of chil-](#)

[dren formerly associated with armed conflicts](#), *Insights on the PSC*, 21 July 2025.

- [Fight against the Use of Child Soldiers](#), *Insights on the PSC*, 19 February 2025.

COTONOU MINISTERIAL SEMINAR PROPOSES RAISING WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION QUOTA FROM 30% TO 50%

The PSC held the second Ministerial High-Level Seminar on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) under the Swakopmund Process in Cotonou, Benin, on 9 September 2026.³



Figure 3: PSC 2nd Ministerial High-Level Seminar on 'Women, Peace and Security', 9 September 2026. (Source: X [@AUC_PAPS](#))

Held under the theme 'Operationalising the Women, Peace and Security Agenda – Quotas, Accountability, and the AU Convention on Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (AU-CEVAWG),' the seminar examined women's participation, conflict prevention, protection and accountability. The adopted [Conclusions](#) explicitly emphasised 'a shift from policy development to implementation', placing the operationalisation of existing commitments at the centre of the next phase. This imperative was echoed by Benin's

³ The seminar featured opening remarks by Corinne Amori Brunet, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Benin and Chairperson of the PSC for September 2026; Liberata Mulamula, Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the AU Commission on Women, Peace and Security; and Doris Mpoumou, UN Women Special Representative to the AU and UNECA. Speciosa Naigaga Wandira Kazibwe, former Vice President of Uganda, delivered the keynote address as Guest of Honour.

Foreign Minister Corinne Amori Brunet, who [stressed](#) the need to move from 'presence to real influence, from commitment to implementation', underscoring the challenge of translating women's representation and policy commitments into meaningful influence and tangible outcomes.

Relevant Previous Decisions:

The inaugural Swakopmund Conclusions of 23 March 2024 [[PSC/MIN/CONCL.INAUGURAL \(2024\)](#)] requested the AU Commission to:

- develop a 'Policy Framework of Women Quotas in Formal Peace Processes across Africa,' guided by the statutory minimum of 30 per cent participation in AU-led conflict prevention, peace processes and election observation missions.
- facilitate consultations with CSOs 'working on women and girls living in conflict settings' and draw on their experience in community, local and regional peace and security.

The 2026 seminar should thus be assessed against earlier commitments as well as its new proposals. Although the Conclusions welcomed progress in implementing the inaugural decisions, they did not present a consolidated account of the status of the commitments made in 2024, including progress towards finalising the quota framework and establishing the envisaged protection and accountability mechanisms.

The most politically significant development is the proposal to raise the existing 30 per cent minimum quota for women's participation to 50 per cent. The Conclusions describe the existing 30 per cent minimum as a 'departure point' and propose raising the quota to 50 per cent across conflict prevention, peace support operations, peace processes and election observation missions led or co-led by the AU. The seminar further called for the ongoing development of the AU Policy

Framework on Women's Quotas to ensure women's equal participation at all stages of AU-led and co-led mediation and peace processes, as well as the integration of their priorities into peace agreements.

Yet the Conclusions neither set a deadline for finalising the framework nor specify how the proposed 50 per cent threshold would be implemented. The 2024 Conclusions had already reaffirmed the goal of full gender parity and called for its application in selecting and appointing mediators, special envoys and technical teams, alongside annual reporting to the PSC. The test now is whether the framework translates these commitments into transparent selection and appointment procedures, effective monitoring and meaningful decision-making authority for women in peace processes.

The urgency is underscored by figures cited in the Conclusions, which reported a decline in women's representation among mediators globally from seven per cent in 2024 to five per cent in 2025. The Conclusions further noted that only 31 per cent of peace agreements contained at least one provision referring to women and girls or sexual violence. These are global indicators rather than measures of the seminar's own performance.

At Cotonou, the DRC's Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, Noëlla Ayeganagato Nakwipone, similarly [emphasised](#) that the objective should not merely be to have more women 'around the table', but to ensure that more women have the capacity to 'influence what is decided around that table'. As highlighted in Amani Africa's [Insight](#) on the seminar, the AU acknowledged in a July 2025 [statement](#), delivered by Akok Manyuat Madut on behalf of Commissioner Bankole Adeoye, that women remained 'dramatically underrepresented in formal peace processes,' accounting for less than 20 per cent of negotiators in African mediation

efforts despite FemWise-Africa having trained more than 500 women mediators. The number trained cannot substitute for tracking appointments, agenda-setting roles and substantive contributions to negotiated outcomes. The gap between the number trained and those participating in roles in peace processes suggests that opportunities for deployment are lacking.

What this suggests is that beyond and above the elevation of the quota target from 30 to 50 per cent, there is a need for identifying avenues for deployment and for enabling the participation of women in various capacities. Any future monitoring framework should therefore disaggregate participation by function, distinguishing observers and technical advisers from chief mediators, negotiators, signatories and members of implementation bodies. Indicators should also assess whether signed agreements contain gender-responsive provisions and establish arrangements for their implementation. Otherwise, in the current trajectory where the 30 per cent target is yet to be met, elevating the target may end up widening the gap between ambition and reality, creating a credibility and legitimacy crisis.

Building on the 2024 commitment to facilitate consultations with women-led civil society organisations, the Conclusions propose a more structured 'transfer mechanism'. This would enable women's contributions at the community level to inform Track II and Track I processes, while ensuring that decisions taken at Track I level are communicated back to grassroots actors. This proposed two-way mechanism could help bridge the gap between women's local peacebuilding roles and their limited influence in formal peace processes. Yet the Conclusions assign no institutional responsibility or timetable for establishing the mechanism and provide no procedures

for receiving, considering and responding to community input. Without such arrangements, grassroots engagement risks remaining episodic rather than meaningfully shaping negotiations.

This should be linked to the Conclusions' call for stronger women mediators' networks, 'in-depth training' and 'systematic inclusion in early-warning mechanisms,' including through FemWise-Africa. Women are described as 'peacemakers, mediators, negotiators, peacebuilders and decision-makers,' rejecting their treatment solely as victims. Notably, although women's participation in defence and security forces and peacekeeping missions constituted one of the seminar's four agenda items, the Conclusions contain no dedicated operational measures addressing recruitment, deployment or leadership in these institutions. This leaves a gap between the breadth of the seminar's agenda and the specificity of its agreed outcomes. Importantly, it represents a missed opportunity, as the expansion of opportunities for and participation of women in these areas is critical not only to expand women's participation but also to their connection to and preparation for higher roles in peace processes.

Protection remains indispensable for meaningful participation of women. Cotonou called on Member States to ratify AU-CEVAWG, adopted in 2025, to accelerate its entry into force. This brings a new continental legal instrument into the Swakopmund agenda, but ratification alone will not ensure protection for women facing intimidation, digital abuse or violence during peace processes. In 2024, participants had already called for a 'rapid response mechanism' and a 'robust monitoring system' to track threats to women in formal and informal peace processes. The 2026 Conclusions do not establish the implementation status of

those commitments. A PSC follow-up should examine both convention ratification and concrete protection procedures, resources and access to assistance for women mediators and peacebuilders. While the seminar commended Member States that had signed and ratified the Convention, the Conclusions provide no country-by-country assessment of its status. This matters for accountability, as signature, ratification, entry into force and domestic implementation represent distinct stages. A PSC review could therefore distinguish these stages and examine measures to address threats and reprisals against women engaged in formal mediation and community peacebuilding.

The seminar further urged a 'comprehensive approach' linking WPS with economic empowerment, human rights and the peace–security–development nexus, including climate change, forced displacement and digital violence. It also called for attention to indigenous mechanisms and cultural practices of conflict prevention, management and resolution. These priorities recognise that women's participation and security concerns extend beyond formal negotiating tables. Translating these priorities into practice will require their integration into early-warning assessments, mediation strategies, peace support operations and recovery planning, supported by clearly assigned institutional responsibilities and adequate resources. This is particularly significant given that the inaugural Conclusions had already called for dedicated Council attention to financing the WPS agenda. Yet the 2026 Conclusions provide no concrete financing arrangements, underscoring the need to assess progress on earlier resource-mobilisation commitments.

Implementation of National Action Plans (NAPs) is another immediate measure. The seminar recorded 37 Member States with NAPs and six Regional Action Plans (RAPs), calling for 'predictable financing', stronger

monitoring and the incorporation of NAP priorities into national development plans and budgets. It encouraged remaining states to adopt NAPs and requested Commission technical support. The number of adopted plans, however, provides little indication of whether they are adequately costed, financed or implemented. This echoes the 2024 commitment to budget NAPs and the subsequent PSC emphasis on dedicated national resources. Assessing expenditure, implementation progress and technical support provided to Member States without NAPs would help determine whether adoption translates into concrete action.

The accountability deficit is documented in Amani Africa's [Special Research Report](#) reviewing fifteen years of PSC engagement with WPS, which finds that 'significant gaps persist between commitments and practice' and identifies irregular reporting and inadequate use of evidence under the Continental Results Framework (CRF). It is to be recalled that, at its [1309th meeting](#) of 30 October 2025, the PSC requested the Chairperson of the AU Commission to develop a mechanism for 'complementary civil society reporting' under the CRF.

The mechanism would enable grassroots women's organisations and networks, in cooperation with Member States, to produce independent shadow reports aimed at strengthening transparency and accountability. Such reporting could complement official data and expose discrepancies between formal commitments and lived experiences. Its effectiveness, however, will depend on a safe and enabling civic space, consistent reporting standards and mechanisms for institutional responses to the findings.

Beyond thematic reporting, a meaningful measure of implementation would be the extent to which WPS commitments inform

the PSC's engagement with country-specific conflict situations, including decisions on mediation, preventive diplomacy and peace support operations.

The Conclusions envisage the next High-Level Seminar in 2028. Deferring an assessment of progress until then would risk weakening the shift 'from policy development to implementation' emphasised at Cotonou. A time-bound AU Commission briefing to the PSC, informed by contributions from Member States, RECs/RMs, women mediators' networks and civil society, could clarify institutional responsibilities for the quota framework and transfer mechanism, establish implementation milestones and assess progress on the basis of evidence.

Ultimately, the credibility of the Swakopmund Process will be measured not by the number of instruments adopted or mediators trained, but by whether the commitments made in 2024 and renewed in 2026 translate into women's sustained influence and decision-making authority in conflict prevention and peacemaking, supported by adequate protection, predictable financing and effective channels for meaningful participation.

Key Actionable Decisions Requiring Follow-up:

The High-level Seminar:

- Requested the Commission to provide technical support to accelerate adoption and implementation of National Action Plans.
- Proposed increasing the existing minimum quota for women's participation from 30 to 50 per cent in AU-led and co-led conflict prevention, peace support operations, peace processes and election observation missions.

Recent Relevant Amani Africa Publications

- [High-Level Ministerial Seminar on Women, Peace and Security, Insights on the PSC](#), 8 September 2026.
- [Women, Peace and Security: Women's Leadership in Addressing Emerging Threats to Peace and Security: Artificial Intelligence and Technology-Facilitated Violence](#), *Insights on the PSC*, 8 March 2026.
- [Fifteen Years of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda at the AU Peace and Security Council](#), *Special Research Report*, 8 May 2026.

PSC PLACES GOOD NEIGHBOURLINESS AT THE CENTRE OF COLLECTIVE RESPONSES TO TERRORISM AND OTHER SECURITY THREATS

On 23 September 2026, at its 1369th session, the PSC met at ministerial level in New York, on the margins of the 81st session of the UN General Assembly, to consider the theme 'Good Neighbourliness and Regional Responses to Security and Terrorism Challenges in Africa'. The session was initially envisaged to take place at the Heads of State and Government level but was subsequently changed to ministerial level.⁴

⁴ The session was chaired by Corinne Amori Brunet, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Benin and PSC Chairperson for September. Mahmoud Ali Youssouf, Chairperson of the AU Commission, delivered introductory remarks, while Bankole Adeoye, Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, briefed the Council. Martin Kimani, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Africa, also addressed the session.



Figure 4: 1369th Meeting of the PSC on 'Good Neighbourliness and Regional Responses to Security and Terrorism Challenges in Africa,' 23 September 2026. (Source: X @ [AfricanUnion](#))

The session took place against the backdrop of growing mistrust and regional fragmentation, which have increasingly complicated collective responses to terrorism and other transnational security threats in Africa. What distinguished this session from previous PSC deliberations on terrorism and violent extremism was its emphasis on good neighbourliness as an essential condition for effective regional security cooperation. By placing this principle, enshrined in various AU instruments, including the Constitutive Act, the 2004 Solemn Declaration on a Common African Defence and Security Policy (CADSP), and the Tunis Declaration on the Code of Conduct on Inter-African Relations [AHG/Decl.2(XXX)], at the centre of its deliberations, the Council shifted attention beyond the evolving threat landscape to the political and institutional conditions necessary for an effective collective response.

As underscored by Martin Kimani during the session, Africa's transnational security challenges demand transnational cooperation, highlighting the practical significance of good neighbourliness, particularly at a time when political

tensions between neighbouring states risk undermining cooperation against shared security threats. In this regard, Minister Brunet emphasised that even during periods of political tension, neighbouring states should maintain channels for timely information-sharing, security and judicial cooperation, and legitimate cross-border exchanges. The key message emerging from these interventions is that political differences should not be allowed to obstruct cooperation against threats that transcend national boundaries.

Reflecting this emphasis, the [communiqué](#) adopted at the session recognises good neighbourliness, peaceful coexistence, mutual trust, interdependence and solidarity as the 'bedrock' of collective security in Africa. It accordingly encourages Member States to place good neighbourliness at the heart of their peace and security cooperation. Importantly, the communiqué goes beyond reaffirming the principle to identify practical measures for translating it into sustained security cooperation. These include rapid and secure intelligence-sharing, joint assessments and risk analyses of cross-border threats, coordinated border surveillance, strengthened liaison and communication mechanisms, and, where appropriate, coordinated operations against terrorist groups and transnational organised crime. The significance of these measures lies in their recognition that effective counter-terrorism cooperation depends not merely on shared commitments but also on sustained operational coordination and mutual trust among neighbouring states.

Border governance also featured prominently in the communiqué as a practical avenue for operationalising good neighbourliness. The Council called for enhanced coordination among the AU Commission, RECs/RMs, the UN and relevant national authorities to address gaps in border management, early

warning, rapid response, joint operations and judicial cooperation. The communiqué underscores that borders are not merely lines of sovereignty or sources of insecurity, but also spaces for cooperation, integration and economic development. In this context, the communiqué welcomed the AU Border Programme and advocated integrated border governance linking security measures with development, local governance, trade facilitation, community engagement and respect for human rights. Minister Brunet's emphasis on connecting and operationalising existing AU and regional frameworks, including the AU Border Programme and the Niamey Convention on Cross-Border Cooperation, rather than creating parallel structures, was particularly pertinent.

Beyond border cooperation, the communiqué addressed other dimensions of collective counter-terrorism efforts. It called for stronger partnerships with the technology and financial sectors to counter terrorist recruitment, financing and propaganda through digital platforms. It also urged neighbouring states to support peace processes where necessary, while condemning support for terrorist and insurgent groups operating against the territorial integrity and security of neighbouring countries. This latter provision is particularly important in the context of regional mistrust, as it underscores that good neighbourliness entails not only active cooperation against common threats but also refraining from actions that undermine the security of neighbouring states. The communiqué further called for accelerated cross-border judicial cooperation, including the finalisation of the African Arrest Warrant and the AU Terrorist Data Bank, to address the legal and operational gaps that enable terrorist networks to exploit national boundaries.

Overall, while the communiqué introduces few new elements, the session made an important contribution by bringing the political foundations of regional security cooperation into sharper focus. The effectiveness of collective security responses ultimately depends on whether Member States can overcome political mistrust, sustain cooperation despite diplomatic differences, and translate the principle of good neighbourliness into sustained operational practice.

As the actionable decisions outlined below highlight, the session was a missed opportunity in terms of the range of measures proposed for advancing trust as a foundation for good neighbourliness and for collective regional action against terrorism. As articulated in the UN Secretary-General's [New Agenda for Peace](#), '[t]rust is the cornerstone of the collective security system. In its absence, States fall back to their basic instinct to ensure their own security, which, when reciprocated, creates more insecurity for all. It would require the implementation of confidence-building measures such as crisis management hotlines, creating/maintaining channels of communication, including through the good offices of regional/global bodies and the use of special envoys. Importantly, it requires verifiable respect for the principles outlined in the AU Constitutive Act, the Common African Defence and Security Policy and Tunis Declaration on the Code of Conduct on Inter-African Relations [AHG/Decl.2(XXX)].

Key Actionable Decisions Requiring Follow-up:

The PSC:

- Requested the AU Commission to expedite the finalisation of both the African Arrest Warrant and the AU Terrorist Data Bank, in order to facilitate enhanced cross-border judicial cooperation, disrupt illicit supply networks,

and effectively address the challenge of regional safe havens.

- Directed the AU Commission to make full use of the continental platform for cooperation among national and regional counter-terrorism centres, under the African Union Counter Terrorism Center (AUCTC), to facilitate the harmonisation and effective implementation of counter-terrorism efforts across the Continent.
- Reiterated its request to the AU Commission, in line with the February 2026 Assembly Decision 978, to develop a continental framework on countering the terrorist use of emerging technologies, including drones, encrypted platforms, and digital finance, building on the Algeria Guiding Principles and ensuring alignment with international standards.

Recent Relevant Amani Africa Publications

- [Good Neighbourliness and Regional Responses to Security and Terrorism Challenges in Africa](#), *Insights on the PSC*, 22 September 2026.

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

Commemoration of Africa Amnesty Month

On 14 and 15 September, the PSC was in Algiers, Algeria, to commemorate the Africa Amnesty Month under the theme 'Advancing the Silencing the Guns Initiative and Strengthening Sustainable Peace through Shared Experiences on SALW Control and De-mining Action.'⁵

⁵ The commemoration saw the participation of Minister of Foreign Affairs, in charge of the National Community Abroad of Algeria; PSC members; AU Special Envoy for Women, Peace and Security; UN



Figure 5: 2026 Commemoration of the Africa Amnesty Month, 14 - 15 September 2026, Algiers, Algeria. (Source: LinkedIn: [@Nations Unies Algérie](#))

As captured in our [Insights on the PSC](#) edition offering pre-analysis for this activity, it is worth noting that although Africa Amnesty Month is mostly a symbolic commemoration, it keeps public focus on the risks of small arms and light weapons (SALW) held and used outside the authority of legitimate state institutions. The AU Roadmap on Practical Steps for silencing the guns (STG) names the spread of SALW as a major driver of conflicts and insecurity. The month also offers an opportunity to take stock of progress on implementing the STG and the challenges that remain.

Monthly Exchange between PSC and UNSC Chairs

On 17 September 2026, the incoming PSC Chairperson for the month of October 2026, Churchill Ewumbue-Monono, Permanent Representative of Cameroon to the AU and the incoming President of the UNSC, Aglaia Balta, Permanent Representative of Greece to the UN, convened a monthly Coordination Meeting for October 2026. They shared the two Councils' tentative activities for October

Resident Coordinator in Algeria; Executive Secretary of the Regional Centre on Small Arms and Light Weapons (RECSA); a Representative of the Executive Secretary of the North Africa Regional Capacity (NARC); President of the National Association of Victims of Anti-Personnel Mine; and a Representative of the Algerian Association for the Promotion of Citizenship and Human Rights.

2026, including the 11th Informal Joint Seminar and the 20th Annual Joint Consultative Meeting, to be held in New York, USA.

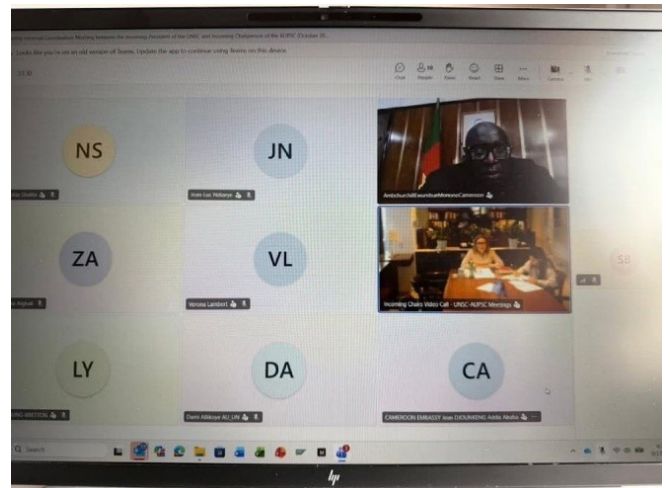


Figure 6: Monthly Coordination Meeting between the incoming PSC Chair for October 2026 and the incoming UNSC President. (Source: X [@AUC_PAPS](#))

Commemoration of the 2026 International Day for Peace

On 21 September 2026, the PSC commemorated the International Day for Peace through a [Press release](#).

The commemoration, which was observed under the theme 'Invest in Peace: For Everyone, Everywhere, Every Day,' saw the Chairperson of the PSC expressing appreciation to UNESCO for convening the commemoration of the International Day of Peace and to the Government of Angola for its enduring partnership in advancing the Pan-African Forum for the Culture of Peace - the Luanda Biennale.

The PSC used the occasion to urge all Member States to redouble their efforts toward building peaceful, diverse, tolerant and inclusive societies. It also called on political parties, civil society organisations, the media, community and faith leaders, women and youth groups, academia and professional bodies to embrace a culture of tolerance and to value unity in diversity, in keeping with the letter and spirit of Ubuntu.

Committee of Experts (CoE) Meetings

The PSC subsidiary body, the CoE, also had engagements during the month. On 3 September 2026, the CoE met to prepare for the Joint PSC–UNSC and PSC–EU PSC Meetings. On the same day, it had another agenda item on ‘Information on the Commemoration of Africa Amnesty Month, and the High-Level Ministerial Seminar on Women, Peace and Security (Swakopmund Process).’ This second agenda item was moved from 4 September to 3 September.

On 21 September, they met again to prepare for the PSC Ministerial Meeting on ‘Good Neighbourliness and Regional Responses to Security and Terrorism Challenges in Africa,’ held on 23 September in New York, USA.



MEDIA AND RESEARCH SERVICES

ABOUT AMANI AFRICA

Amani Africa is an independent African based policy research; training and consulting think tank with a specialization and primary focus on African multilateral policy processes, particularly those relating to the African Union.

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

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