



Security Council

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Report of the Security Council mission to Ethiopia, 5 and 6 October 2023

I. Introduction

1. In a letter dated 6 September 2023, the President of the Security Council informed the Secretary-General that the Council had agreed to participate in the eighth informal joint seminar and the seventeenth annual joint consultative meeting between the members of the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, on 5 and 6 October 2023 in Addis Ababa. The composition of the mission and agendas of the two events were communicated to the Secretary-General in a letter dated 26 September 2023 from the President of the Security Council (S/2023/710). The mission was co-led by Brazil, represented by the Permanent Representative, Sérgio França Danese, and Mozambique, represented by the Permanent Representative, Pedro Comissário Afonso, and comprised the following other members: Ferit Hoxha (Permanent Representative), Albania; Dai Bing (Deputy Permanent Representative), China; Clarisse Paolini (Deputy Political Coordinator), France; Hernán Pérez Loose (Permanent Representative), Ecuador; Michel Xavier Biang (Permanent Representative), Gabon; Carolyn Abena Anima Oppong-Ntiri (Deputy Permanent Representative), Ghana; Shino Mitsuko (Deputy Permanent Representative), Japan; Vanessa Frazier (Permanent Representative), Malta; Anna Evstigneeva (Deputy Permanent Representative), Russian Federation; Pascale Christine Baeriswyl (Permanent Representative), Switzerland; Mohamed Issa Abushahab (Deputy Permanent Representative), United Arab Emirates; Fergus John Eckersley (Acting Deputy Permanent Representative), United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; and John Kelley (Political Coordinator), United States of America.

II. Background

2. The members of the Security Council participated in the eighth informal joint seminar and the seventeenth annual joint consultative meeting with the Peace and Security Council at the headquarters of the African Union in Addis Ababa on 5 and 6 October 2023.

3. The general objective of the annual joint consultative meeting between the Peace and Security Council of the African Union and the members of the Security Council is to strengthen partnership and enhance cooperation between the two Councils through an exchange of views on issues of interest to both bodies in the areas of maintenance of international peace and security, particularly in Africa.



4. The specific objective of the seventeenth annual joint consultative meeting was for the two Councils to exchange views on the situations in the Sudan and the Sahel region, the situation in Somalia and the activities of the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS), and the situation in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

5. Prior to the seventeenth annual joint consultative meeting, the members of the Security Council and of the Peace and Security Council held the eighth informal joint seminar to exchange views on financing African Union-led peace support operations; youth, peace and security; and enhancing cooperation between the Peace and Security Council of the African Union and the Security Council (working methods).

III. Seventeenth annual joint consultative meeting of the members of the Security Council and of the Peace and Security Council

6. The members of the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union held their seventeenth annual joint consultative meeting in Addis Ababa on 6 October 2023. The meeting was co-chaired by the Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations and President of the Security Council for the month of October 2023 and by the Permanent Representative of the Congo to the African Union and Chairperson of the African Union Peace and Security Council for the month of October. The meeting was also attended by the African Union Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, Bankole Adeoye, and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the African Union and Head of the United Nations Office to the African Union, Parfait Onanga-Anyanga.

7. The Co-Chairs of the meeting highlighted the progress achieved over the past few years in strengthening the strategic partnership between the two organizations. Both made calls for closer coordination between the two Councils, including joint field missions, expressing hope that the consultations would add more value to their work.

8. The Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security of the African Union and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the African Union highlighted the evolving nature of the partnership and stressed its growth since the signing of the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security in April 2017. In that regard, they referred to collaborative efforts of the two organizations to prevent and resolve conflicts in Africa. However, they recognized that room still existed for improving the partnership, particularly through regular consultations between the two Councils to ensure common understanding on emerging or evolving issues as well as ways to resolve them. They noted the emergence of new threats, which demanded greater cooperation between the two Councils, such as the rise in terrorist attacks, adverse effects of climate change and resurgence of unconstitutional changes of government. Messrs. Adeoye and Onanga-Anyanga stressed the need for flexible, predictable and sustainable financing to the African Union peace support operations.

The situation in the Sudan

9. Members of both Councils noted that the scale of the crisis in the Sudan and its impact on the civilian population required impetus for urgent action towards a political solution to secure a durable ceasefire and better humanitarian access. They recalled that the mediation initiatives (the Jeddah process and the African Union and Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)-led processes) had all called

for an immediate cessation of hostilities and the start of a comprehensive and inclusive Sudanese-led and Sudanese-owned political process, addressing contentious issues.

10. In their deliberations, members of both Councils stressed the need for a coordinated diplomatic push aimed at harmonizing and building on the complementary efforts of the different actors and platforms. Regarding the African Union-IGAD joint working group, which was established to identify Sudanese stakeholders for the initiation of a mediation process, it was noted that the major obstacle that the initiative faced was fragmentation among the Sudanese civilian stakeholders. There was recognition of the need to intensify communication with the Government of the Sudan and all actors in order to constructively engage and raise their awareness of the aspirations of the African Union-IGAD joint mediation approach prioritizing a Sudanese-led and Sudanese-owned political process. Both Councils recognized the various initiatives and stressed the importance of further enhancing collaboration and coordination to ensure coherence of efforts.

The situation in the Sahel region

11. The members of the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council expressed deep concern over the continuing fragility of the security situation in the Sahel region, which was characterized by the continuation of terrorist attacks in the region. They also expressed concern over the resurgence of unconstitutional changes of government in the region. They acknowledged the cumulative impact of terrorism and armed criminal networks on the region. They expressed deep concern about the worsening humanitarian situation throughout the region. They noted that millions of civilians had been displaced due to conflict and climate change and that the livelihoods of millions had been disrupted amid the limited capacity of States to manage the multifaceted effects of these challenges. Members of both Councils called for comprehensive solutions to mitigate persistent insecurity in the region and to address the underlying causes and drivers of the conflict. They underscored the need to promote peace, security and socioeconomic development, as well as to prevent the illicit flow of small arms and light weapons in the region. It was also noted that significant efforts were needed to mitigate the effects of climate change.

12. Members of both Councils underscored the need for the two Councils to approach the withdrawal and ongoing liquidation of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali collaboratively, emphasizing the need for joint approaches towards the stabilization in the country, while underscoring the primary responsibility of the transition Government in that regard. They further expressed concern at the rise in terrorism in the subregion, which had now extended to the coastal States. The two Councils agreed that there were no military solutions to the security crisis in the Sahel and underscored the need to enhance national and regional resilience through early warning and response mechanisms. It was also noted that effective risk analysis and the implementation of national and regional road maps could be leveraged to de-escalate conflicts.

13. Members of the two Councils also referred to the emerging geopolitical dynamics and external influence as among the factors driving instability in the Sahel. In that regard, they called for the principles of national sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in internal affairs to be upheld. Several members focused on the need to strengthen the resilience of States and address development needs and governance gaps. The efforts of regional institutions and subregional mechanisms, such as the Economic Community of West African States, the Lake Chad Basin Commission and the Multinational Joint Task Force, were highlighted, as was the need to harmonize various initiatives through a consensual Sahel strategy, which would address duplication of efforts. In addition, some Council members emphasized

the need to support regional anti-terrorism cooperation, including the Multinational Joint Task Force, through predictable and sustainable funding, logistics and capacity-building, which would enhance their capacity to degrade terrorism and extremist groups in the region.

The situation in Somalia and activities of the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia

14. Members of the two Councils referred to the recent request by the Federal Government of Somalia for a technical pause of the second phase of the ATMIS troop drawdown. They stressed that the shared objective between the African Union and the United Nations was to support the Federal Government of Somalia in moving the political process forward, as well as the progress on the security transition and capacity-building.

15. Regarding the security transition, a member of the Peace and Security Council noted that the ATMIS drawdown was being driven by unpredictable financing and not the security situation in Somalia, given that Al-Shabaab still posed a potent threat. The significant funding gap for ATMIS was noted, and the Secretary-General, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and Member States were encouraged to continue efforts to explore funding arrangements for ATMIS in earnest, bearing in mind the full range of options available to the United Nations, the African Union, the European Union and other partners.

The situation in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo

16. The members of the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council expressed deep concern about the intensifying violence and attacks against civilians perpetrated by the armed groups, as well as the spread of hate speech, and deplored the worsening humanitarian situation. Some members also strongly condemned the alarming increase in sexual violence against women and girls. Members of the two Councils called for armed groups to disarm and embrace dialogue, including through the Nairobi and Luanda processes and the quadripartite initiative of the East African Community, the Economic Commission of Central African States, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC).

17. While noting the operations of the East African Community Regional Force, the Force's bilateral arrangements and the planned deployment of SADC troops, members noted that peace support operations should be focused and short-term in nature. They further noted that the call of the Democratic Republic of the Congo for an expedited drawdown of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) needed to be considered within the holistic context of the political and security developments in the country and implications for the region. In that regard, they stressed the need for MONUSCO to coordinate with the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and troop- and police-contributing countries and hand over tasks to the Government to ensure that there was no security vacuum, and to guarantee the security of United Nations personnel and assets. It was also emphasized that sustainable peace and security could be attained only through a comprehensive approach that included respect for international humanitarian and human rights law, respect for the territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and socioeconomic development, and one which prioritized inclusive dialogue and support for and implementation of security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration.

18. The Secretary-General's policy brief "A New Agenda for Peace" was commended as having the potential to create a mechanism to address intractable

conflicts, such as in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Joint Verification Mechanism was also welcomed as a useful tool. Delegations reaffirmed support for the revitalization of the 2013 Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region, consistent with the decisions of the 1140th meeting of the Peace and Security Council, held at the Heads of State level in February 2023. While welcoming the African Union-led strategic initiative to promote coordination, coherence and collaboration of peace processes for resolving the conflict, they observed that it would require trust-building both within and among States in order to deliver tangible outcomes. Members of the two Councils welcomed the African Union contribution of \$2 million to the East African Community Regional Force from the Peace Fund of the African Union and commended the good offices missions on behalf of the Secretary-General and sustained engagements of the Heads of the United Nations Office to the African Union and MONUSCO and the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region. They further stressed the need for States to implement their commitments; mobilize support for political dialogue and reconciliation; deepen regional economic integration; address root causes and drivers of conflict; and promote the inclusive participation of youth and women in peace processes.

Adoption of joint communiqué

19. At the conclusion of the seventeenth annual joint consultative meeting, the members of the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union agreed to issue a joint communiqué, which was subsequently issued as document [S/2023/749](#).

IV. Informal joint seminar of the members of the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council

20. In advance of the seventeenth joint consultative meeting, the members of the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council held their eighth informal seminar on 5 October 2023. The seminar was co-chaired by the Permanent Representative of Mozambique to the United Nations and Chair of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa and by the Permanent Representative of the Congo to the African Union and Chairperson of the African Union Peace and Security Council for the month of October.

21. The financing of African Union-led peace support operations; youth, peace and security; and enhancing cooperation between the Peace and Security Council of the African Union and the Security Council were specifically discussed. In view of the increasing cooperation between the two organizations, members of both Councils stressed the importance of close working relations between the two organizations.

Financing of African Union-led peace support operations

22. Members of the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council recognized the evolving security situation in Africa, including the rise in terrorist threats. They noted that United Nations peacekeeping missions might have neither the necessary mandates adapted to changing circumstances nor the required equipment to perform counter-terrorism and other similar operations. They stressed that African Union-led peace support operations had a complementary role in the maintenance of peace and security in Africa, particularly in contexts where kinetic action was required. They agreed on the need to address the issue of flexible, sustainable and predictable

financing for African Union-led peace support operations mandated by the Security Council.

23. Members of the Peace and Security Council and the African members of the Security Council relayed the progress that the African Union had made in revitalizing the Peace Fund of the African Union and setting up the African Union Human Rights Compliance Framework. They strongly stressed the need for the Security Council to urgently take “concrete action” on access to assessed contributions for African Union-led peace support operations authorized by the Security Council. The Peace and Security Council referred to the African Union consensus paper in which three models were identified for possible financing through United Nations assessed contributions: the hybrid mission model, such as the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur; the support office model, as in the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM)/ATMIS; and support to subregional peace support operations, such as the Multinational Joint Task Force, the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel and the SADC Mission in Mozambique. The Peace and Security Council stressed that it considered it essential for the United Nations to provide the necessary political, financial and logistical support for African Union peace support operations, as it was in the interest of global peace and security and in line with the primary responsibility of the Security Council as stipulated in the Charter of the United Nations.

24. Members of the Security Council acknowledged the importance of ensuring predictable and sustainable financing for African Union peace support operations and emphasized that the African Union should play an enhanced role. They stressed the importance of flexibility, as a “one size fits all” approach would be unworkable and each situation would have to be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. They further stressed that the focus should not only be on the financing aspect but on the overall collaboration between the two organizations in implementing support to peace support operations. Some members of the Security Council expressed their expectation that financing of African Union peace support operations should include some degree of burden-sharing with the African Union. These members also stressed that any future resolutions needed to specify the primary role of the Security Council in the authorization and oversight of African Union-led peace support operations as well as the General Assembly’s mandate for budgetary approval and oversight. Some members underscored the leadership and autonomy of the African Union and the need for the traditional donors to maintain their support to African Union-led peace support operations and for the streamlining and optimization of United Nations peacekeeping missions to avoid duplication of efforts. During the discussions that followed, members of the Peace and Security Council reiterated the need for the Security Council to agree to the provision of United Nations assessed contributions, while Security Council members expressed readiness to engage constructively with the African members of the Security Council once a draft framework resolution was presented.

Youth, peace and security

25. Members of the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council welcomed the inclusion of the issue in the agenda for the first time and commended the work of both Councils. The two Councils further welcomed the progress made by the African Union in adopting the Continental Framework for Youth, Peace, and Security, the appointment of the African Union Youth Envoy and Youth Ambassadors for Peace, and the roll-out of the Youth for Peace programme. They also commended the operationalization of the Wise Youth initiative as a subsidiary programme of the African Union’s Panel of the Wise and underscored the need to enhance the participation of youth in preventive diplomacy, dialogue, and mediation in Africa. They further underscored the role of youth as stewards of peace, noting their immense potential in fostering unity, reconciliation and intergenerational dialogue in societies.

26. Participants at the informal seminar recognized that Africa's development potential was linked to its youth and underscored the need to foster sustainable, inclusive and equitable socioeconomic development on the continent. Several members of the two Councils underscored that the youth, peace and security agenda was fundamental to the maintenance of international peace and security but noted that challenges persisted in the meaningful inclusion of youth in decision-making processes. Some participants noted that the lack of opportunity, alienation, and marginalization of the youth were potential drivers of conflict, expressing concern that youth were being radicalized by extremist and criminal networks preying on their alienation. Members of both Councils called upon the African Union Commission and the United Nations Secretariat to address the structural barriers to youth participation and to scale up the implementation of joint youth, peace and security strategies in peacebuilding and sustainable development. The Peace and Security Council informed the participants that the month of November would be recognized by the Peace and Security Council as Africa Youth Month and welcomed the prospects for a joint session with the Security Council to take stock of the implementation of the youth, peace and security agenda.

Enhancing cooperation between the Peace and Security Council of the African Union and the Security Council (working methods)

27. The two Councils recognized the progress made in strengthening cooperation and improving working methods in recent years. Participants from both Councils expressed support and appreciation for the monthly informal coordination meetings between the incoming Chairperson of the Peace and Security Council and the President of the Security Council and called for those meetings to be structured to better leverage collaboration between the Councils. Participants also called for more frequent engagements between the two Councils, including at the expert level. Participants from both Councils called for more African Union officials to provide briefings at meetings of the Security Council, particularly when mandate renewals were under consideration. Participants also called for a stronger role of the African members of the Security Council, to serve as a bridge with the African Union. In that regard, some participants expressed support for granting the African members of the Security Council more opportunities as co-penholders on African issues. Some participants also stressed the need to review, adjust and terminate the Security Council sanctions regimes, taking into account the evolution of the situation on the ground. Support was also expressed for greater coordination between special representatives and envoys, as well as collaboration between the subsidiary bodies of the two Councils.

28. Participants noted that joint visits by the two Councils would promote a common understanding of conflict dynamics in countries and regions of common concern. Members of the two Councils agreed to conduct joint field and assessment missions, with modalities of such trips being determined on a case-by-case basis.

V. Additional meetings

Meeting with United Nations officials

29. On 5 October, Security Council members held a meeting with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the African Union, Mr. Onanga-Anyanga, and the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Horn of Africa, Hanna Tetteh. Participants exchanged views on strengthening the African Union-United Nations partnership in peace and security, financing of African Union-led peace support operations, and peace and security issues in the Horn of Africa.

Meeting between the Security Council and the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia

30. On 5 October, the members of the Security Council were hosted to a working lunch by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, Demeke Mekonnen Hassen.

31. The Deputy Prime Minister commended members of the Security Council for their commitment to a strong partnership with the Peace and Security Council and also commended the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Chairperson of the African Union for their support for the implementation of the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security. He recognized the important coordination role of the African members of the Security Council between the two Councils. On the working methods of the Security Council, the Deputy Prime Minister called for improvements to ensure that countries on the agenda of the Council can fully participate in discussions concerning them. He also expressed support for reforms of the Security Council, including the full and equitable representation of Africa. He further explained his country's views about developments in the Horn of Africa region.
