

MONTHLY DIGEST ON THE AFRICAN UNION PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL

AMANI AFRICA

Media and Research Services

January, 2025

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THE MONTH AT A GLANCE

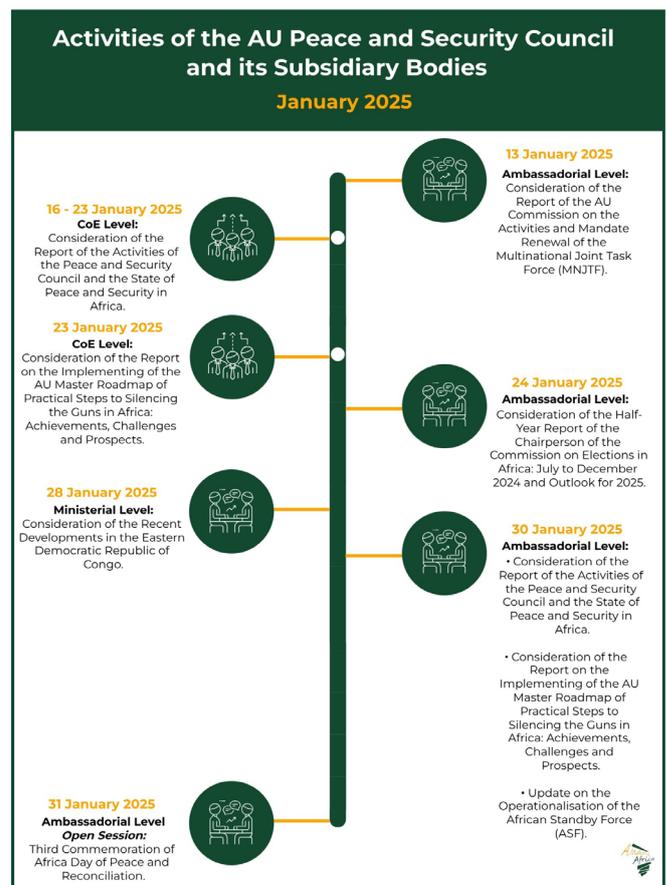
In January 2025, the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC) undertook its activities under the chairship of the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire. During the month, the Council had a scheduled program of work consisting of seven substantive sessions covering eight agenda items, with only one session dedicated to conflict-specific situation. The Provisional Program of Work (PPoW) underwent two revisions during the month. As a result, the Council held five substantive sessions covering seven agenda items, with only one addressing conflict-specific situation. All sessions except one held at the ministerial level were held at the ambassadorial level. The Council also had an Open Session to commemorate the third Africa Day of Peace and Reconciliation.

The first revision of the PPoW saw the introduction of a session for an informal consultation with countries in political transition at the ambassadorial level, which was postponed from its originally scheduled date in December 2024. This was totally removed from the PPoW of the month during the second revision of the PPoW. The session on Somalia and the African Union Support and Stabilisation Mission in Somalia (AUSSOM), initially scheduled for 22 January, was moved to 29 January before it was completely dropped when the second revision was made. The session on strengthening cooperation and collaboration between the PSC and RECs/RMs in the management of conflict and new security threats on the Continent, originally set for 20 January, was rescheduled to 30 January but was subsequently completely removed when the PPoW went through the second revision. The revision also brought changes to the schedule of the Committee of Experts.¹

¹ The Committee of Experts session on Consideration of the Report of the Activities of the PSC and the State of Peace and Security in Africa which was initially planned to take place from 15–17 January was extended to 16–21

The second revision saw the introduction of an emergency ministerial session on the situation in Eastern DRC on 28 January as a result of the escalation of the conflict.

While the outcomes of the four sessions were adopted as communiqués, there was no outcome document for the session on 30 January on the operationalisation of the African Standby Force.



January. And the Committee of Experts session on the Consideration of the Implementing of the AU Master Roadmap of Practical Steps to Silencing the Guns in Africa; Achievements, Challenges and Prospects, originally scheduled for 21 to 23 January, was held on 22 and 23 January.

PSC TASKED THE LCBC SECRETARIAT, RATHER THAN THE AU COMMISSION, WITH ENGAGING NIGER ON ITS FULL RETURN TO MNJTF

The first PSC session of 2025, the 1254th, was convened on 13 January to consider the Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the activities of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) against the Boko Haram terrorist group and renewal of its mandate.²



Figure 1: The PSC's 1254th session on MNJTF, 13 January 2025 (Source: X @AUC_PAPS)

The main outcome of the session was the renewal of the mandate of the Force for another 12 months, effective from 1 February 2025. Along with this, the session also called on the AU Commission and the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) to renew the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and Support Implementation Agreement (SIA) between AU, LCBC and MNJTF Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs), which will guide the provision of AU support to MNJTF, for the same period as the mandate of the MNJTF.

The session also endorsed the Chairperson's six-page [report](#). This highlighted ongoing security threats, including continued Boko

² During the session, Amb. Mamman Nuhu, the Executive Secretary of the Lake Chad Basin Commission and Head of MNJTF Mission and Major General Ibrahim Sallau Ali, the MNJTF Force Commander briefed the Council.

Haram activity, with a 'slight increase' in attacks on military targets and a rise in Improvised Explosives Device (IED) incidents from 50 to 70 in 2024 compared to 2023. It also noted a decline in Boko Haram surrenders. Also highlighted in the report and expounded further in the edition of [Insights on the PSC](#) produced on the session ahead of the session were operational challenges, including inadequate counter-IED equipment, amphibious platforms, and MNJTF-dedicated attack aircraft, as well as interoperability issues among TCCs.

Cognisant of the various constraints for the effective functioning of the MNJTF, the [communiqué](#) that the PSC adopted during the session renewing the mandate of the MNJTF for a further period of 12 months underscored the need for further strengthening the MNJTF by providing the mission with enhanced capabilities, including force enablers and multipliers. While the PSC did not indicate from where these capabilities would be sourced and what the AU may provide in this respect, the communiqué also provided for the allocation of additional equipment from the Continental Logistic Base to the MNJTF.

There were two other areas of particular interest that had a bearing on the functioning of the MNJTF, which were highlighted during the PSC session and canvassed in the communiqué. The first relates to the need for strengthening coordination and effective participation of MNJTF contributing countries. As noted in the edition of *Insights on the PSC*, MNJTF operated during 2024 without the participation of Niger. In this respect, the PSC emphasised the need for ensuring 'the active participation of the Republic of Chad and the Republic of Niger in the activities of the Mission.' Instead of calling for joint engagement by AU and LCBC, the PSC left the responsibility of engaging Niger (to ensure its full return to

the MNJTF) to the LCBC Secretariat. This is a missed opportunity for the AU to assume and exercise joint leadership rather than leaving this diplomatic responsibility totally in the hands of the LCBC Secretariat.

The other issue concerns the continued threat that the LCB region faces, including the increased use of IEDs. In this respect, the PSC held that ‘Boko Haram remains an existential regional threat to peace, security and stability in the Lake Chad Basin area and beyond.’ Also of interest is the emphasis the PSC put on the need for the continued implementation of the regional stabilisation strategy and the multidimensional approach involving investing in local economic development, peace, reconciliation, inter-faith dialogue and provision of basic public services.

Key actionable decisions requiring follow-up

The PSC:

- Requested the AU Commission and LCBC to renew the MoU and Support Implementation Agreement (SIA) between AU, LCBC and MNJTF TCCs.
- Called on the Lake Chad Basin Commission to continue engaging Niger to ensure its full return and cooperation with the Force and to promote a comprehensive, multi-sectoral and inclusive approach and civil-military cooperation for creating conditions for return of displaced persons.
- Requested the AU Commission, working with the LCBC Secretariat, to report to the Council regularly.

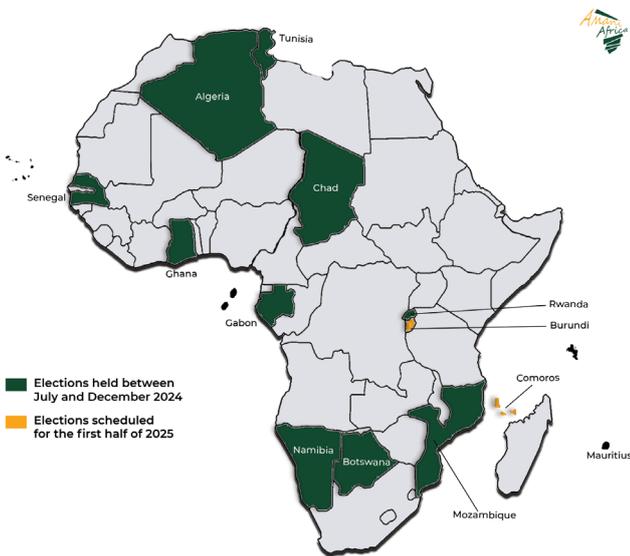
PSC ENCOURAGED THE AU COMMISSION TO DEPLOY PREVENTIVE DIPLOMACY WHILE EVADING DIFFICULT ISSUES ON ELECTIONS IN AFRICA

The 1255th session of the PSC convened on 24 January focused on reviewing the half-year report of the Chairperson of the Commission regarding elections held in Africa from July to December 2024, as well as outlining the outlook for the first half of 2025. During the session, Commissioner for PAPS, Bankole Adeoye, presented the Chairperson’s report on behalf of the Commission.

The session adopted the half-year [report](#), which provides an overview of election outcomes in Member States from July to December 2024. It highlights, as captured in the edition of [Insights on the PSC](#) on the session, the AU’s electoral support, previews upcoming elections, and examines best practices and governance trends across the continent.

As illustrated in the map below, the session reviewed electoral processes in 11 Member States—Algeria, Rwanda, Tunisia, Mozambique, Botswana, Mauritius, Gabon, Senegal, Namibia, Ghana, and Chad—which conducted presidential, legislative, and constitutional referendum elections during this period. The Chairperson’s report notes that the AU deployed election observers to all these countries except Algeria and Chad, as it did not receive official invitations from these Member States, although the matter with respect to Chad is more complicated than just non-receipt of invitation.

The session concluded with the adoption of a [communiqué](#).



Countries that held elections between July - December 2024 and planned elections in the first half of 2025

As outlined in our analysis of the session, the recent elections across Africa presented a mix of continuity, democratic progress, and growing concerns over electoral integrity. Mozambique’s elections, marred by allegations of fraud, post-election violence, and assassinations, underscored deeper challenges of electoral credibility and political repression. Rwanda and Tunisia’s elections reaffirmed the dominance of incumbents, with Paul Kagame and Kaïs Saïed, respectively, securing landslide victories. On the other hand, Gabon’s constitutional referendum was hailed as a step towards democratic restoration, but provisions allowing the junta leader’s candidacy in 2025 contradict AU norms against coup leaders contesting elections.

In contrast, Botswana’s opposition, Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC), ended the ruling party’s decades-long dominance in a peaceful transition, while Namibia elected its first female president in a high-turnout vote reinforcing its democratic credentials. Ghana’s and Mauritius’s elections further exemplified institutional strength and voter’s power, in a show of democratic consolidation in both these countries and Botswana.

After considering the Chairperson’s report on these election-related situations, the PSC congratulated Member States that successfully conducted elections. It also commended those who increasingly relied on domestic financial resources to fund and organise their electoral processes, emphasising the importance of self-reliance, electoral integrity, and sustainable democratic governance.

Regarding the practice and methodology of AU Election Observation Missions (AUEOM), the PSC commended the AU Commission for finalising the 2023 Annual Report on Elections in Africa, which could be a useful instrument for documenting lessons learned and improving electoral observation practices. Additionally, the PSC urged Member States to make every effort to invite AUEOMs to monitor and support their electoral processes.



Figure 2: The 1255th session of the PSC on elections, 24 January 2025 (Source:X @AUC_PAPS)

Furthermore, the Chairperson’s report highlights upcoming elections in Burundi and Comoros in the first half of the year. The PSC, in its communiqué, urged these countries to conduct their elections in accordance with national laws and international standards to ensure transparency and inclusivity. Additionally, the PSC called on the Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC) to allocate sufficient funds for AU election-

related activities and encouraged the AU Commission to deploy preventive diplomacy missions alongside election observation efforts while strengthening coordination with Member States, RECs/RMs, and other AU Organs.

However, the Communiqué adopted at the session evaded addressing election-related issues arising in the context of a return to constitutional order after a military coup. Regarding Gabon, the Council issued a vague call for member states to fully comply with the African Charter on Democracy, Elections, and Governance (ACDEG) despite the adoption of a new constitution that allows junta leaders to run for office in 2025. This echoes past events, particularly the military takeover in Chad following the death of President Idriss Deby Itno.

At its 996th session, the PSC firmly demanded that the Chairman and members of Chad's Transitional Military Council (TMC) honour their commitment not to contest or participate in the May 2024 elections. These demands were reiterated in the PSC's 1016th and 1106th sessions. However, despite these resolutions, the TMC leader Mahamat Idriss Deby ran in the presidential election, violating both the PSC's decision and the AU's anti-coup norms. Although the PSC was expected to uphold its own decisions, the Council took a contradictory stance at its 1224th session by inviting Chad to deliver statements and even commending the country for 'successfully' organising elections during the review period. This move effectively legitimised an electoral process that directly contravened the PSC's earlier decisions and the standing ban by AU norms. Gabon now appears to be following a similar trajectory, yet the PSC has refrained from indicating that those involved in the military seizure of power are ineligible for standing for elections held for restoring constitutional order.

The PSC avoided paying any attention to the post-election violence in Mozambique, a critical issue highlighted in the Chairperson's report. The report noted that the aftermath of the country's 9 October general elections was marred by widespread violence, including the alleged assassinations of Elvino Dias, legal advisor to Venancio Mondlane, and Paulo Guambe, a representative of PODEMOS party. Instead, in the Communiqué adopted by the session, the PSC commended the Member States for the management of election results and preventing post-election violence, highlighting the performative nature of the PSC session on elections. As previously mentioned in our analysis, the Chairperson's half-year report and the PSC sessions on elections in Africa can be used as an opportunity to identify early warning signs of electoral crises and take proactive measures to prevent disputes from escalating into violence.

Key actionable decisions requiring follow-up

At the 1255th session, the PSC:

- Called upon Member States, that have not yet done, so to expedite the signature and ratification of the ACDEG; also called on Member States to spare no effort to invite AU Election Observation Mission to support and cover their electoral processes in order to actively participate and contribute to the consolidation of democracy in Africa;
- Reiterated the appeal to the Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC) to allocate adequate financial resources to support election-related activities of the AU Commission in order to enable it to more effectively and efficiently fulfil its mandate of supporting electoral processes in the Member States, including through the provision of technical assistance

and the deployment of AU Election Observer Missions; and

- Urged the AU Commission to publish the '2023 Annual Report on Elections in Africa – Comparative Commendable Lessons Learned.'



Figure 3: 1225th PSC session. (Source: X @AUC_PAPS)

PSC MINISTERIAL SESSION CALLING FOR WITHDRAWAL OF THE M23 FROM TERRITORIES IT HAS SEIZED

On 28 January, the PSC convened an emergency ministerial-level meeting as its 1256th session to address the escalating conflict in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). As captured in the edition of the [Insight](#) on the PSC on the session, the meeting was prompted by a letter from the DRC requesting urgent discussion due to the deteriorating security situation, particularly following the M23 rebel group's offensive, which had at that point in time captured key towns like Minova, Sake and Goma.



Figure 4: Kacou Houadja Leon Adom Foreign Minister of Cote d'Ivoire and PSC Chairperson

The session, chaired by Côte d'Ivoire's Foreign Minister Kacou Houadja Leon Adom, PSC Chairperson for January 2025, featured statements from AU Commission Chairperson Moussa Faki Mahamat. Briefings were provided by the AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, Bankole Adeoye, alongside ministers from Angola, Tanzania and Kenya as well as the countries of concern, the DRC and Rwanda.

From the [communiqué](#) of the session, the Council voiced concern over the rising tensions between the DRC and Rwanda, urging both nations to prioritise peaceful resolution over military escalation and underscored AU principles from its Constitutive Act and PSC Protocol, including non-interference, peaceful coexistence and the right of member states to live in peace and security. Council condemned 'the heinous attacks by the M23' and 'the activities of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) and Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR).' Apart from calling on all these groups to ceasefire and lay down their arms, and disband, the PSC called for an immediate and unconditional withdrawal of M23 from Minova, Sake and Goma, and other occupied areas in the DRC, and all other foreign armed and terrorist groups operating in the DRC, in line with the Communiqué of the [Mini-Summit of Luanda](#) of 23 November 2022.

The PSC reiterated that the Luanda Process (led by Angola's President João Manuel Lourenço) and the Nairobi Process remain the primary frameworks for resolving the crisis. It urged 'the signatories of the August 2024 Ceasefire Agreement and the 'Harmonised Plan for the Neutralisation of FDLR and their Disengagement' of November 2024, adopted under the auspices of the Luanda Process to implement the aforementioned Agreements and to urgently and unconditionally return to dialogue.'

In a departure from PSC's previous sessions on the conflict in Eastern DRC involving the M23, the communiqué 'unequivocally' condemned 'any foreign military support being provided to M23 and any other armed group operating in Eastern DRC and **demands** the immediate cessation of such support and the immediate withdrawal of any such external party from the entire Congolese territory.' As noted in the edition of Insights on the PSC on the session, the UN Secretary General stated regarding the source of support for M23 that 'he is troubled by the most recent report of the Group of Experts established pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1533, concerning the presence of Rwandan troops on Congolese soil and continued support to the M23.' Further to its condemnation of support for the M23, the PSC correspondingly also condemned 'support provided by military forces to specific armed groups, in particular the FDLR, and **demands** the immediate cessation of such support.'

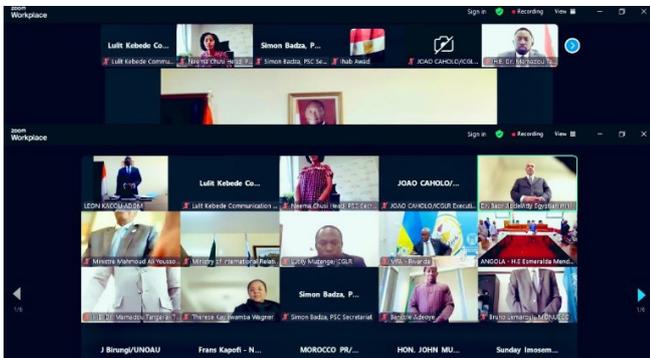


Figure 5: Participants during the 1256th meeting (Source: X@AUC_PAPS)

The outcomes align with parallel efforts, such as the UN Security Council's emergency [meeting](#) on the same day.

Key Actionable Decisions requiring follow-up

The PSC:

- Stressed the need for the implementation of the outcome of the Quadripartite Summit of the EAC, ECCAS, ICGLR and SADC, under the auspices of the AU, held on 27 June 2023, in

Luanda, Angola, and tasked the AU Commission to urgently convene a follow-up Quadripartite meeting on the implementation of the commitments made during the first Summit of the Quadripartite.

- Mandated the AU Commission to deploy a fact-finding mission to investigate the crisis within the Quadripartite Framework and report back promptly.
- Proposed a PSC meeting at the Heads of State and Government level to be held on the sidelines of the AU Assembly in February 2025, signalling intent to escalate diplomatic efforts.

PSC ON A QUEST FOR FULL OPERATIONALISATION OF THE AFRICAN STANDBY FORCE

On 30 January 2025, the PSC convened its 1257th session to receive updates on the operationalisation of the African Standby Force (ASF). The meeting provided an opportunity to assess the status of ASF readiness, key challenges to its operationalisation, and the ongoing strategic review process aimed at enhancing its effectiveness as Africa's primary mechanism for peace support operations (PSOs). The session, however, did not produce an outcome document.

A major focus of the Council's deliberations was the continued support for the Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs) in establishing and sustaining regional logistics depots. While the establishment of the Continental Logistics Base (CLB) in Douala, Cameroon was an important milestone, the incomplete development of regional logistics facilities remains a challenge to the deployment of ASF by RECs/RMs. Despite deploying SADC

Standby Forces to Mozambique and DRC, SADC has not fully constituted its logistics base and, as such, relied on the CLB. The Council reaffirmed the importance of finalising and operationalising these regional depots to strengthen the ASF's logistical readiness.

Sustainable financing for PSOs emerged as another key point of discussion. The Council emphasised the urgent need to secure predictable and sustainable funding mechanisms to support ASF deployments. While previous PSC sessions have called for innovative financing solutions—including leveraging the AU Peace Fund—the challenge of mobilising adequate resources persists. The absence of a robust cost-sharing model among AU member states and RECs was raised and constitutes another dimension of the financing of the ASF.

The session also underscored the integration of International Humanitarian and Human Rights Law (IHL and IHRL) into the ASF doctrine. Given the evolving nature of conflicts on the continent, particularly the rise of violent extremism and asymmetric threats, the application of IHL and IHRL in PSOs remains critical. Ensuring compliance with these legal frameworks is essential to ensure accountability in the conduct of peace support missions and for the legitimacy of ASF operations. However, more robust effort is needed to ensure the practical enforcement of these legal norms, particularly in complex and fluid conflict environments.

Despite the Council's reaffirmation of the ASF's importance, the edition of [Insights](#) on the PSC in the session pointed out that fundamental structural and political challenges continue to hinder its operationalisation. Institutional misalignment between the AU and RECs, competing regional security interests,

and the lack of a unified decision-making framework remain unresolved. While the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) adopted during the 15th Specialised Technical Committee on Defence, Safety, and Security (STCDSS) in May 2023 sought to clarify the division of labour between the AU and RECs, practical implementation issues are still persisting.

Looking ahead, the upcoming 17th Specialised Technical Committee meeting on Defence, Safety, and Security (STDSS) is expected to provide further clarity on the ASF's strategic direction, including in the context of the ongoing review process. The PSC has previously emphasised the need for a comprehensive reassessment of the ASF's structure and mandate to ensure its relevance in addressing contemporary security threats. In this context, it is worth noting that a consultative meeting held in Algiers, Algeria, which included the Technical Consultative Meeting on the ASF and consultations with ASF RECs/RMs, was centred around the themes of legal and policy framework of the ASF, the political challenges facing its operationalisation, securing predictable and sustained financing, operational challenges facing ASF and mechanisms to enhance the capacities of ASF. Yet, the strategic review process continues to face delays, reportedly due to funding gaps, which could be addressed by leveraging the role of the NET4PEACE.

Relevant AU Executive Council Decisions:

- The 45th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council [EX.CL/Dec.1265 - 1278\(XLV\)](#) had requested the Commission to develop a comprehensive and inclusive roadmap for the extensive review of the Africa Standby Force (ASF) and submit the outcomes and recommendations of the review to the 17th Ordinary Meeting of the STCDSS.

AFRICA DAY OF PEACE AND RECONCILIATION COMMEMORATED AS THE CONTINENT FACES MOUNTING CONFLICTS

On 31 January 2025, the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC) convened its final session of the month as an open session of its 1258th meeting, commemorating the Third Africa Day of Peace and Reconciliation.³



Figure 6: Speakers at the 1258th Session of the PSC

The commemoration comes after the conclusion of the Madiba Nelson Mandela Decade of Reconciliation in Africa (2014–2024), a decade dedicated to promoting reconciliation and unity across the continent. In line with this initiative, the PSC had previously committed to establishing an annual session aimed at sharing experiences and lessons learned in national reconciliation, peace restoration, and strengthening social cohesion in Africa. In his [statement](#), Bankole Adeoye, the commissioner for PAPS, emphasised that given the current volatile and conflict-ridden conditions, *'this day is a reminder of the importance of reconciliation and the*

³ The session featured interventions from Dr. Vasu Gounden, Founder of the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD), and Parfait Onanga-Anyanga, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General to the African Union (UNOAU).

tireless efforts required to heal the wounds of the past, overcome sharp division and promote justice.'

As a commemorative session, the reflections touched on a wide range of issues having a bearing on peace and security as well as reconciliation. The discussions did not provide any concrete reflection on addressing any of the conflict situations on the continent. Rather, much of the reflections were made in the abstract without little reference to how they relate to and can be pursued in specific conflict situations. As such, the outcome document mostly involved aspirational elements.

In the [communiqué](#), adopted, the Council emphasise the ongoing necessity of fostering a culture of peace, tolerance, justice, forgiveness, and reconciliation as fundamental principles of conflict prevention, particularly in post-conflict societies. The PSC also stressed that achieving sustainable peace requires a comprehensive and inclusive approach. A key focus of this process is the prioritisation of restorative justice, societal healing, and the establishment of governance frameworks that are inclusive, transparent, and accountable. These elements are considered essential for ensuring long-term stability and social cohesion across the continent.

The Council also urged member states to intensify and expand their efforts in addressing the structural root causes and underlying drivers of violent conflicts across the continent through a holistic and comprehensive approach. Moreover, the session reaffirmed the importance of inclusive and transparent political transitions, emphasising the need for comprehensive peace, reconciliation, and development initiatives across the continent. Recognising the significance of inclusive

engagement in fostering sustainable peace, the session emphasised the need for inter-generational dialogue as a means of addressing the legitimate grievances of youth. Additionally, the Council called for the incorporation of peace education into school curricula and community-based programs, reinforcing the role of education in fostering a culture of peace.

To enhance local ownership and ensure the sustainability of peacebuilding efforts, the session highlighted the value of indigenous approaches, advocating for the integration of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms and indigenous knowledge systems as essential tools for reconciliation. The session also emphasised the need to strengthen mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of peace agreements, ensuring accountability and progress. It further urged all parties to fully commit to adhering to stipulated timelines and agreed-upon terms, reinforcing the credibility of peace processes.

Key Actionable Decisions Requiring Follow-Up

The PSC:

- Called for the integration of the Africa Day of Peace and Reconciliation into regional and national frameworks to ensure that its observance is deeply embedded within localised peace and reconciliation efforts.

OTHER ACTIVITIES OF THE PSC

Besides the substantive sessions, other activities of the PSC included the meeting of the Committee of Experts (CoE). The CoE met to review the draft 'Report of the PSC on its Activities and the State of Peace and Security in Africa' and the draft 'Report on the Implementing of the AU Master

Roadmap of Practical Steps to Silencing the Guns in Africa: Achievements, Challenges and Prospects.' The CoE held its meetings on the review of these reports from 16-17 and 20-23 January. The PSC also met on 30 January to consider these two reports. These reports will be presented during the 38th AU Summit.



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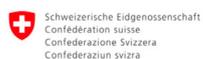
ABOUT AMANI AFRICA

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

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

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