



Security Council

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Letter dated 20 December 2024 from the Chair of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa for 2024, as endorsed by the members of the Working Group.

I would be grateful if the present letter and the report could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Pedro Comissário **Afonso**

Chair

Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa



Report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa for 2024

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted to inform the Security Council of the activities of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa in 2024.

II. Organizational matters

2. The Working Group is a subsidiary organ of the Security Council, established pursuant to the statement by the President of the Security Council of 31 January 2002 ([S/PRST/2002/2](#)), in which the Council recognized the need for adequate measures to prevent and resolve conflicts in Africa and indicated its intention to consider the establishment of an ad hoc working group to monitor the recommendations contained in the presidential statement and to enhance coordination with the Economic and Social Council.

3. The Permanent Representative of Mozambique to the United Nations, Pedro Comissário Afonso, served as Chair of the Working Group from 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2024. The Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone served as Vice-Chair throughout the reporting period.

4. During the period under review, the Working Group held seven meetings and facilitated the ninth informal joint seminar and the eighteenth annual joint consultative meeting between members of the Security Council and members of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, held in New York on 17 and 18 October 2024, respectively.

III. Summary of the activities of the Working Group in 2024

A. Programme of work

5. On 8 March 2024, the Working Group met to consider its activities for 2024 as proposed by the Chair and, following discussion, agreed to the proposed programme of work.

B. Implementation of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#)

6. On 30 April, the Working Group considered the topic “Implementation of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#), on flexible financing for the African Union peace support operations: opportunities, challenges and way forward”. The Working Group heard briefings by the Assistant Secretary-General for Africa, Martha Pobee, the Assistant Secretary-General for Support Operations, Lisa M. Bittenheim, the Director of Conflict Management in the Political Affairs, Peace and Security Department of the African Union, Sarjoh Bah, the Executive Director of Security Council Report, Karin Landgren, the Director of the Center on International Cooperation at New York University, Eugene Chen, and the Director of Amani Africa, Solomon Derso.

7. The Assistant Secretary-General for Africa updated the Working Group on the Secretariat’s engagement with the African Union to agree on the next steps for the

operationalization of resolution 2719 (2023), including the modalities for its implementation.

8. The Assistant Secretary-General for Support Operations noted that, in resolution 2719 (2023), the Security Council had identified the establishment of a United Nations support office as a preferred model for authorizing financing for African Union peace support operations. While much of the upstream work would be guided by political considerations, the Department of Operational Support would lead the downstream aspects related to mission support modalities.

9. Speaking on behalf of the African Union Commission, Mr. Bah recalled that, at the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union held in February 2024, the adoption of resolution 2719 (2023) had been welcomed as a significant milestone in the partnership between the African Union and the United Nations. However, that resolution had fallen short of the request of the African Union for full access to United Nations-assessed contributions, which had been a major concern for some African Union member States.

10. Ms. Landgren highlighted some outstanding matters that needed to be addressed, including the need for: (a) the United Nations and the African Union to reach a shared understanding of the key issues in resolution 2719 (2023), such as the decision-making process for the deployment of African Union peace support operations, the related tasks and responsibilities and the role of the United Nations in the political aspect of those operations; (b) agreement on suitable conflict situations to be addressed within the framework of resolution 2719 (2023); and (c) clear understanding of how the 25 per cent funding gap would be filled.

11. Mr. Chen cautioned that having the United Nations oversee the resources of African Union peace support operations authorized under resolution 2719 (2023) and administer them on the basis of the existing United Nations administrative framework had real implications for African ownership and the ability of the African Union to benefit from its comparative advantage as a first responder. The African Union would not be in control of either the development of the resource requirements or the use of the funds by the missions.

12. Mr. Derso noted that the enhanced expectations and demand for the African Union in terms of ensuring that its financial reporting and accountability processes were in line with those of the United Nations would require a certain level of adjustment to its working arrangements and capacities.

13. In the discussion that ensued, the Working Group members welcomed the adoption of resolution 2719 (2023) and encouraged closer engagement between the African Union Commission and the United Nations Secretariat to address its implementation. They noted that any peace operation must be guided by a coherent political strategy that included the establishment of joint planning, decision-making and reporting processes, regular information exchange and clear mutual understanding of all elements of the operation's implementation.

14. In that regard, the Security Council should be fully involved and consulted from the outset in the development of any African Union peace support operation. The African Union and the United Nations should have a common understanding of the Financial Rules and Regulations of the United Nations and of the implementation of the 75 per cent ceiling on United Nations contributions as required by resolution 2719 (2023). The need to clarify the roles of the United Nations Secretariat and the African Union Commission in the budget preparation and approval process was underlined. The budgetary decisions made by the General Assembly must be informed by clear mandates and clear operational plans, for which mutual understanding between the African Union and the United Nations was required.

15. Some members stressed the need to develop a mechanism to fund the 25 per cent gap that should involve international partners, including the African Union and the European Union, to contribute to that overall effort. They suggested that the Peace Fund of the African Union could be used to shoulder some of the burden, while the European Union could provide continuous support to African Union peace support operations on a case-by-case basis, in line with its long-standing support for such operations. That support could include funding, equipment, supplies, infrastructure, services, training and advice at the national, subregional and continental levels.

16. On the principle of burden-sharing, some members argued that, by deploying peace support operations, the African Union was acting on behalf of the international community and that African Member States should not be expected to fill the 25 per cent funding gap. African Union peace support operations deserved to be granted the same priority as is granted to similar missions in other parts of the world.

17. Furthermore, the peace support operations should be African-led and African-owned. Although the implementation of such operations would be complex, African Union ownership should be maintained. The African Union and the United Nations must effectively coordinate in determining the African Union peace support operation that would be financed within the purview of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#). In that regard, it was important to ensure the autonomy and flexibility of African Union missions while adhering to the rules and regulations of the United Nations.

18. Some members cautioned that, beyond financial issues, there were many technical aspects of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#) that must be resolved, namely: the conduct of joint strategic assessments; the command and control of operations; the speed of decision-making to ensure the readiness of both organizations in the event of an urgent situation under the resolution; the strengthening of cooperation and coordination between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union; and the strengthening of African Union capacities.

19. Some members expressed support for testing the implementation of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#) by beginning with a “low-hanging fruit” case, rather than a challenging one that could lead to failure. An early test case would help to identify potential flaws in the agreed set-up. The onus was on the African Union to present potential cases that fit the parameters established in the resolution. Other members suggested that the African Union Support and Stabilization Mission in Somalia could be the first test case, pending further assessments by the African Union and the United Nations.

20. Some members stressed the need for African Union peace support operations to be conducted in compliance with international human rights and international humanitarian law. Others advocated the full implementation of the African Union Human Rights Compliance Framework.

21. On 3 July and 13 September, the Working Group received updates from the United Nations task force on the implementation of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#). The Head of the task force, Mamadou Gaye, gave a briefing to the Working Group, and members of the Working Group exchanged views with members of the task force, including representatives of the Department of Peace Operations, the Department of Operational Support and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

C. Informal joint seminar and annual joint consultative meeting between members of the Security Council and members of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union

22. On 21 June and 3 July, the Working Group discussed preparations for the ninth informal joint seminar and the eighteenth annual joint consultative meeting between members of the Security Council and members of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, which were to be held in New York on 17 and 18 October 2024, respectively.

23. In the period from 11 to 18 October, the Working Group held joint meetings with the Committee of Experts of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union and contributed to the negotiations on the draft joint communiqué that was ultimately adopted by the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union at the conclusion of the eighteenth annual joint consultative meeting on 18 October and subsequently issued as a document of the Security Council ([S/2024/762](#)).

24. For the first time, the informal joint seminar was held in the format of a retreat, with external speakers from the United Nations Secretariat and the African Union Commission.

25. The Chair of the Working Group (Mozambique) co-chaired the ninth informal joint seminar with the Chair of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union for the month of October (Egypt), while the President of the Security Council for the month of October (Switzerland) and the Chair of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union for the same month (Egypt) co-chaired the eighteenth annual joint consultative meeting.

D. Lessons learned from transitions in United Nations peacekeeping

26. On 20 August, the Working Group convened a joint meeting with the Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations to discuss lessons learned from transitions in United Nations peacekeeping. The meeting was chaired by Mozambique and the Republic of Korea in their capacities as Chairs of the respective Working Groups.

27. The Working Groups heard briefings by the Chief of the Peace Operations Policy and Best Practices Service of the Policy, Evaluation and Training Division, Flaminia Minelli, the Deputy Director of the Central and Southern Africa Division, Ugo Solinas, and the Deputy Managing Editor of Security Council Report, Dawit Yirga.

28. Ms. Minelli emphasized the need for strong Security Council support, host State consent and inclusive strategies involving various stakeholders to ensure safe and sustainable transitions. With regard to the transition in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mr. Solinas underscored the importance of careful planning and coordination, sustained engagement with the host Government, the reinforcement of State authority during the transition, and capacity-building for national defence and security forces and local governments to ensure sustainable peace and development. He noted that, despite some progress, challenges had remained in the country, particularly with regard to protecting civilians and dealing with armed groups. Continued international support and Security Council engagement were therefore required to preserve the peacebuilding gains and ensure a successful transition. Mr. Yirga shared five key observations from recent research, namely: the importance of contingency planning for high-risk scenarios; the need to prioritize civilian

protection during transitions; the need for robust host country engagement; the critical role of United Nations country teams in sustaining post-transition peace; and the need to broaden transition planning to involve regional organizations such as the African Union.

29. In the subsequent discussion, the Working Group members noted the importance of coordinated transition processes and inclusive approaches to building lasting peace, with national actors playing a leading role.

30. Some members advocated regular updates on the status of transitions across United Nations peace operations, including those that have transitioned within the previous 24 months, as stipulated in resolution [2594 \(2021\)](#), and the systematic application of best practices in transition management, drawing from the extensive experience of the United Nations. They also advocated involving local populations in peace operations, adopting a gender-sensitive approach and ensuring collaboration between United Nations country teams, national authorities and international partners to sustain peace efforts post mission. They noted the importance of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#) and called for missions to be flexible and adaptive to fluctuations in host State conditions.

31. Some members called for adequate resources, including potential temporary increases in the United Nations police component, to support host States in maintaining law and order during transitions, and for specialized training, particularly on the protection of civilians and human rights, during the handover to national forces.

32. Several members called for clear mandates for peacekeeping operations and carefully crafted exit strategies with realistic benchmarks and a focus on peacekeeper safety. The need for stronger cooperation with host countries and more investment in strategic communication to address mis- and disinformation was also highlighted.

33. Some members emphasized the importance of addressing the root causes of conflicts and maintaining good relations with host States, with a focus on mutual trust and understanding. They urged the Peacebuilding Commission to address the long-term needs of post-transition countries.

IV. Conclusion

34. The Working Group continued to play a vital role in fostering greater understanding, cooperation and partnership between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union.

35. In 2024, the successful adoption of the joint communiqué of the eighteenth annual joint consultative meeting between members of the Security Council and members of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union was pivotal in establishing a common language and shared understanding between the two Councils on the challenges and strategic priorities of Africa. The communiqué not only sets out the joint understanding of the two Councils but also serves as a reference for reinforcing a unified approach to resolving conflicts in Africa.

36. The timely and collaborative manner in which the agenda items for the meeting were agreed upon by the two Councils contributed significantly to the meeting's success, highlighting the importance of early preparatory work, including the clear and transparent definition of roles and responsibilities.

37. In 2024, the Working Group focused its efforts on deepening the two Councils' understanding of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#), a pivotal and potentially paradigm-shifting

instrument in the partnership that was designed to ensure adequate, predictable and sustainable financing for African Union-led peace support operations.

38. The Working Group's contributions to discussions on the steps necessary to ensure the preparedness of both Councils for the operationalization of resolution 2719 (2023), particularly through the facilitation of briefings and sessions for the wider membership and the members of the joint task force, underscored its importance as a vital bridge for dialogue and coordination.

39. The joint session of the Working Group and the Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations on lessons learned from transitions in United Nations peacekeeping exemplified innovative approaches to overcoming silos within subsidiary organs, strengthening collaborative frameworks and promoting synergies among the various subsidiary organs addressing issues affecting the African continent.

40. In their exchanges, the two Councils addressed several key thematic areas relevant to the development of Africa, such as the adverse effects of climate change, ecological changes and natural disasters, including floods, drought, desertification and land degradation, and their exacerbating effects on food security and other humanitarian, social and economic challenges affecting the continent's security and stability.

41. The Working Group must build on its momentum by institutionalizing its processes and explore innovative approaches to promote frank and in-depth discussions between both Councils, such as the interactive format of the annual informal joint seminar and the possibility of holding retreats to deepen dialogue, cooperation and trust.

42. The Working Group should also focus on practical and procedural improvements that offer potential for progress, such as the establishment of an informal mechanism to review the implementation of previous joint communiqués from the annual consultations between the Peace and Security Council of the African Union and the Security Council.

43. The Working Group's section of the Security Council website could be revamped to offer better accessibility and support.

44. Lastly, the Working Group should continue to focus on ensuring that the outcomes of its deliberations and engagements have a meaningful impact on advancing efforts in conflict prevention, mitigation and resolution in Africa.

45. In 2024, the Chair sought to ensure that the Security Council paid greater attention to the views of the African continent on matters of peace and security affecting it, while improving communication and coordination between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union and identifying ways to increase cooperation and foster a structured partnership between the African Union and the United Nations.

46. Special recognition is due to the outstanding support provided by the Security Council Affairs Division, whose logistical and administrative assistance has ensured the smooth functioning of the Working Group's activities amid numerous competing challenges.