



# Security Council

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## Letter dated 20 December 2024 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to Security Council resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#), by which the Council established the framework for financing African Union-led peace support operations through United Nations assessed contributions on a case-by-case basis. In the resolution, I was requested to submit an annual report to the Security Council on progress in the implementation of the resolution to enable its alignment for greater effectiveness.

The unanimous adoption of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#) marked a major milestone in the partnership between the African Union and the United Nations. The resolution builds on the enduring relationship between the two organizations, taking into account their respective strengths and comparative advantages. With the resolution, the Security Council responded to long-standing calls to support African Union-led peace support operations – including peace enforcement and counter-terrorism operations – with mandates from the Council and through United Nations assessed contributions, on a case-by-case basis. The importance of the resolution was reiterated by Member States during the Summit of the Future held in September 2024 and was reflected in action 21 of its outcome document, the Pact for the Future.

As I have previously reported (see [S/2024/629](#)), following the adoption of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#), the United Nations and the African Union put in place the requisite internal architecture to ensure the rapid operationalization of the resolution. In this regard, I established an interdepartmental task force on resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#), led by the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, to coordinate the efforts of the Secretariat and its engagement with the African Union and with Member States towards the implementation of the resolution.

The interdepartmental task force is chaired by the Department of Peace Operations, with representation from the Department of Operational Support, the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance, the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. Subsequently, a senior-level technical task team was established to support the work of the task force. Similarly, the African Union established an internal task force under the leadership of the African Union Commissioner for Political, Peace and Security, with a task team led by the Peace Support Operations Division of the African Union Commission. Together, the United Nations task team and the African Union task team form the joint African Union-United Nations task team for the operationalization of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#).



The joint African Union-United Nations task team developed the joint African Union-United Nations road map for the operationalization of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#), which the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and I jointly endorsed during the eighth African Union-United Nations annual conference, held in Addis Ababa on 21 October 2024. The joint road map is focused on four core areas: (a) joint planning, decision-making and reporting; (b) mission support; (c) financing and budgeting; and (d) compliance and protection of civilians. Through the joint road map, the African Union and the United Nations have reaffirmed their engagement to deepen their collaboration and strengthen their joint institutional and operational readiness. In this regard, the two organizations have already taken steps to implement the road map, with the understanding that delivery on the road map activities is not a prerequisite for the application of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#).

### **Development of a joint road map for the operationalization of Security Council resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#)**

Following the adoption of Security Council resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#), the United Nations and the African Union held a series of consultations to discuss the operationalization of the resolution. The interdepartmental task force held briefings with key stakeholders, including Member States, troop- and police-contributing countries, donors and think tanks, in New York and Addis Ababa to gauge their views and expectations regarding the implementation of the resolution. The United Nations Secretariat briefed the Security Council Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa three times (in February, June and September 2024), as well as the Military Staff Committee. The African Union Commission held preliminary consultations with members of the African Union Peace and Security Council to obtain their initial guidance on resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#).

The United Nations Office to the African Union held initial consultations with the African Union Commission to lay the groundwork for the joint analysis and determination of the operational requirements resulting from the resolution and from the establishment of a conducive environment for the joint implementation of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#).

On 16 April 2024, the United Nations and the African Union held the twenty-third meeting of the United Nations-African Union Joint Task Force on Peace and Security in New York. The Joint Task Force agreed that a team of representatives of the United Nations interdepartmental task force on resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#) would travel to Addis Ababa to initiate senior level exchanges with their African Union counterparts on the way forward for the implementation of the resolution, with facilitation support from the United Nations Office to the African Union.

On 23 and 24 May 2024, the joint African Union-United Nations task team held its first in-person consultations on the operationalization of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#), in Addis Ababa. They discussed the resolution paragraph by paragraph to reach a common understanding on its implications for institutional readiness in the areas mentioned in the resolution. Following the visit, the first draft of the joint African Union-United Nations road map for the operationalization of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#) was prepared. In addition, the joint task team established four main workstreams to enable further technical-level exchanges: (a) joint planning, decision-making and reporting; (b) mission support; (c) financing and budgeting; and (d) compliance and protection of civilians.

From 29 to 31 July 2024, the joint African Union-United Nations task team held its second in-person meeting on the operationalization of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#) at United Nations Headquarters in New York. The second African Union-United Nations consultations built on the outcome of the first in-person meeting and on the

subsequent work conducted through weekly online meetings of the four workstreams. The consultations provided an opportunity to review and finalize, at the technical level, the draft joint road map for the operationalization of the resolution. The final draft of the joint road map was reviewed by the Under-Secretaries-General of the United Nations interdepartmental task force and by the African Union Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security.

The joint African Union-United Nations road map for the operationalization of resolution 2719 (2023) serves to articulate key principles that will guide the joint efforts of the African Union and the United Nations towards the implementation of the resolution. These principles are underpinned by four strategic objectives related to the four initial areas discussed and the workstreams established. The joint road map provides details of the necessary actions of the African Union and the United Nations, respectively, and of the two entities together, to ensure mutual institutional readiness for the implementation of the resolution under each strategic objective. In the joint road map, specific deliverables, lead entities and timelines are further identified in the four thematic workstreams.

The African Union and the United Nations have agreed that the joint road map must remain sufficiently flexible to take into account the work to be undertaken by each institution, together and separately, to ensure mutual institutional readiness for the implementation of resolution 2719 (2023), while at the same time allowing a forward-leaning approach towards any potential future implementation of the resolution. It was also agreed that adequate financial and human resources would be required in order to implement the resolution and its road map.

During the eighth annual African Union-United Nations conference, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and I endorsed the Joint African Union-United Nations road map for the operationalization of resolution 2719 (2023).<sup>1</sup>

### **Status of implementation of resolution 2719 (2023)**

While much of the focus of the African Union and the United Nations since the adoption of Security Council resolution 2719 (2023) has been on the development of the joint road map for the operationalization of the resolution, the two organizations are also working together to develop joint planning processes, building on shared experiences and taking into account the existing collaboration platform between them. The operational sustainment of African Union-led peace support operations depends on strengthened collaboration between the African Union and the United Nations in the provision of operational support. This will also require a review of operational frameworks and modalities to ensure that these are fit for purpose to meet the demands of rapid deployment. Financial considerations and arrangements will be important in the planning and implementation phases (from start-up to mission closure) of African Union-led peace support operations and must be compliant with resolution 2719 (2023).

The implementation of resolution 2719 (2023) presents opportunities to continue to enhance compliance with international human rights and humanitarian law and applicable standards of conduct and discipline, as well as the prioritization of the protection of civilians, notwithstanding the complex operating environments.

#### *Joint planning, decision-making and reporting*

The reporting and monitoring requirements on the status of implementation of the mandates of African Union-led peace support operations authorized by the

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<sup>1</sup> See [www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/note-correspondents/2024-10-22/note-correspondents-joint-communicu%C3%A9-of-the-8th-au-un-annual-conference](https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/note-correspondents/2024-10-22/note-correspondents-joint-communicu%C3%A9-of-the-8th-au-un-annual-conference).

Security Council within the framework of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#), and on the status of implementation of the resolution are stipulated, respectively, in paragraphs 15 and 16 of the resolution. In this regard, the African Union and the United Nations have agreed that a reporting and consultation mechanism and modalities specific to resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#) will be put in place, building on previous practices.

Furthermore, in accordance with the request as contained in the statement by the President of the Security Council of 23 May 2024 ([S/PRST/2024/2](#)), the joint planning guidelines initially drafted in February 2024 were reviewed by the joint African Union-United Nations task team and replaced by a shorter and more operational joint planning modalities document, which is focused on the assessment, planning and decision-making for establishing new African Union-led peace support operations under the framework of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#). The joint planning modalities document is expected to be jointly finalized by the African Union and the United Nations shortly.

#### *Mission support*

In accordance with paragraphs 8, 9 and 14 of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#), the Secretariat engaged with African Union counterparts to develop shared deliverables to be included in the joint African Union-United Nations road map for the operationalization of the resolution, prioritizing the enhancement of the institutional and operational readiness of both organizations by identifying and mapping the support requirements necessary to enable the delivery and sustainment of African Union-led peace support operations. To that end, the finalization of joint African Union-United Nations support planning modalities will be critical in mapping out agreed planning processes, as well as ensuring the alignment of logistics and operations in future African Union-led peace support operations authorized under resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#).

In the short term, the United Nations support office model is the preferred approach of the African Union and the United Nations, as it would allow for the application of United Nations rules and regulations, aligns responsibility with accountability, is predictable and sustainable and has been tested by both organizations. However, in the medium-to-long term, it is important that the two organizations continue to learn from their respective operational support mechanisms, including framework agreements, support concepts, and the management systems of regional logistics bases, in order to enhance institutional and operational readiness.

In addition, the mission support workstream served to agree on the need to enhance institutional collaboration and joint learning between operational support experts, including through the African Union-United Nations knowledge and expertise exchange programme. In October 2024, in Addis Ababa, the Under-Secretary-General for Operational Support and the Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission jointly unveiled a course outline for a new landmark initiative under the knowledge and expertise exchange programme known as Synergy Training for African Union-United Nations Resources. Jointly developed by technical teams from both organizations, this training will contribute to preparing United Nations and African Union managers to better meet operational support responsibilities when involved in joint operations, including those under resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#). The Synergy Training for African Union-United Nations Resources programme is also aimed at contributing towards enhancing mutual institutional readiness in both organizations for the implementation of the resolution.

### *Financing and budgeting*

During the financing and budgeting workstream discussions, the African Union and the United Nations shared their respective general finance and budget processes. When discussing the United Nations peacekeeping workflow, the two organizations identified the areas in which they would collaborate, including on budget formulation and the processes of United Nations legislative bodies. During consultations and discussions, the joint African Union-United Nations task team for the operationalization of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#) explored ways to ensure coherence and alignment between African Union and United Nations policies and regulations with a view to accelerating the budget approval and fund disbursement process, which is needed for rapid deployment.

On the issue of burden-sharing and the way in which the African Union and the United Nations would jointly mobilize the 25 per cent not funded through United Nations assessed contributions under resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#), it was agreed that a joint African Union-United Nations engagement strategy would need to be developed on a case-by-case basis that would include political engagement with various stakeholders and elements on resource mobilization.

### *Compliance and protection of civilians*

In paragraph 11 of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#), the Security Council stressed the “operational necessity” for African Union-led peace support operations accessing United Nations assessed contributions to be planned and conducted in compliance with the African Union Compliance Framework on International Humanitarian Law and the human rights due diligence policy on United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces. The African Union and the United Nations have continued to take steps, including through the ongoing African Union Compliance and Accountability Framework project, which is supported by the European Union, to ensure compliance with international human rights and humanitarian law and applicable standards of conduct and discipline while strengthening the protection of civilians and promoting gender-responsive approaches. The African Union and the United Nations will take stock of progress made and define future modalities.

As part of the workstream on compliance and protection of civilians as well as the ongoing partnership with the African Union on conduct and discipline, the United Nations and the African Union worked together to identify priorities for implementation in the areas of case management, victim assistance and remedial action, reporting misconduct and communication with Member States on matters of misconduct, and violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law. Specific activities are under way to advance implementation in these areas. The policies on conduct and discipline and on sexual exploitation and abuse adopted by the African Union in 2018 were also reviewed by the United Nations and the African Union in African Union-led workshops in October 2024 with a view to updating the policies in 2025 as part of strengthening the African Union Compliance and Accountability Framework and for its implementation under resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#). Simultaneously, the United Nations has established an inter-agency working group to determine the process, capacity and structures needed to implement the United Nations human rights due diligence policy on United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces at Headquarters and at the field mission level in the context of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#).

The United Nations and the African Union also collaborated to enhance joint institutional readiness on the protection of civilians. The two organizations made progress in identifying key strategic planning documents in which the protection of civilians needs to be mainstreamed to ensure alignment and integration in operations

deployed under the framework of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#). In addition, an outline and a plan were developed to assess capacity and resource needs, including training and the sharing of good practices and lessons learned, for African Union-led peace support operations to effectively protect civilians. The United Nations and the African Union also continued discussions to explore the scope and modalities for African Union-led peace support operations to implement protection-of-civilians mandates effectively. This included discussions on frameworks and options that would allow for the flexible and context-specific implementation of a protection-of-civilians mandate by African Union-led peace support operations.

During their consultations, the African Union and the United Nations highlighted the central role of Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) on women and peace and security, along with subsequent resolutions, in advancing recovery and stabilization, supporting peace processes and fostering long-term security and governance, including within the Silencing the Guns by 2030 initiative, sustainable development, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063 of the African Union. Integrating women and peace and security perspectives across all workstreams was identified as essential to enhancing operational effectiveness.

The African Union and the United Nations outlined immediate partnership priorities, including conducting an assessment to evaluate the status of the implementation of resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#), along with subsequent Security Council resolutions and African Union Peace and Security Council communiqués on women and peace and security, at the operational level in the context of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#). Another priority is to finalize the African Union policy on mainstreaming women's participation in peace support operations to address capacity and capability gaps for the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda in African Union-led peace support operations. Additional areas for collaboration that were discussed include reviewing and enhancing African Union operational planning documents to ensure that women and peace and security aspects are fully integrated and prioritized. The United Nations and the African Union also explored options for sustained funding and ongoing engagement to advance this work.

Overall, the discussions highlighted the imperative of complying with international human rights and, where applicable, international humanitarian law, in both civilian and kinetic counter-terrorism operations, as well as activities to prevent and counter violent extremism. This approach is essential to ensuring the long-term effectiveness of these efforts and achieving sustained stability.

### **Potential application of the resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#) framework to a specific circumstance or situation**

Since the adoption of Security Council resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#), there have been several discussions among Member States on the potential application of the framework of the resolution to specific circumstances or situations in Africa.

Following the request of the African Union Peace and Security Council in its communiqué of its 1217th meeting, held on 20 June 2024, and in accordance with paragraph 8 of Security Council resolution [2748 \(2024\)](#) in connection with the successor mission to the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia, I submitted to the Security Council, on 26 November 2024, a joint report with the Chairperson of the African Union Commission. In the joint report, we recommended the hybrid implementation of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#) as the only solution for the financing of the African Union Support and Stabilization Mission in Somalia.

## Conclusion and observations

The international peace and security architecture is increasingly confronted with more complex transnational security challenges, including the use of asymmetric tactics by non-State armed groups, terrorists and violent extremists. Meanwhile, the African Union and the United Nations have steadily deepened their partnership for peace and security. The adoption and implementation of Security Council resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#) create new opportunities for further strengthening African Union-United Nations cooperation in line with the African Union's goal of silencing the guns by 2030. It responds to my long-standing calls for predictable and sustainable resources for African Union-led peace support operations and represents a significant step forward in our capacity to respond to crises in collaboration with our regional partner. I once again commend the Security Council for the adoption of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#).

The joint African Union-United Nations road map for the operationalization of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#) is a living document. It serves as a framework for continuously strengthening the overall performance and impact of both organizations. Delivery on the road map activities is therefore not a prerequisite for the application of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#) in specific circumstances or country situations. The African Union and the United Nations stand ready to support the deployment of an African Union-led peace support operation authorized by the Security Council under the framework of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#).

The United Nations and the African Union share a long history of lessons learned and partnership. Both organizations will need to continuously adapt, strengthen their capacities and adjust their internal processes in order to maintain and enhance institutional readiness for the deployment and management of new types of missions under the framework of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#). Since the adoption of the resolution, both organizations have allocated human and financial resources to develop the joint road map and start the implementation of its activities. It will be important to ensure that the organizations have the capacities, systems, procedures and processes, as well as the continued support of Member States, to fully deliver on the joint road map.

The implementation of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#) will continue to require coordination between the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council. Should the two Councils decide to authorize such African Union-led missions, a coordinated decision-making process will enhance coherence and complementarity between the responses of the two Councils as well as between the activities of United Nations peace operations and African Union-led peace support operations. Close coordination between the two Councils would also enhance the overall effectiveness of peace and security efforts on the African continent by sending a unified message to key partners such as troop-contributing countries and financial donors and would contribute towards fostering broader support for African Union-led peace support operations authorized under resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#). It would also enable African Union-led peace support operations mandated for deployment under resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#) to receive sustained joint support and guidance from both Councils. In this regard, I welcome the discussions on the implementation of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#) and on peace support operations in Africa during the ninth joint informal seminar of the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council, held on 16 October 2024.

The African Union and the United Nations have maintained a joint approach towards the operationalization and implementation of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#). Joint political and operational engagement will be required at all stages of implementation of the resolution in order to successfully implement its framework. Furthermore, in

paragraph 15 of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#), I was requested to submit to the Security Council, in consultation with the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, joint reports on the status of implementation of the mandate of African Union-led peace support operations authorized by the Council within the framework of the resolution. To this end, I recommend that my annual updates to the Security Council be submitted in the form of a joint report with the Chairperson of the African Union Commission.

I would be grateful if you could bring the present letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

*(Signed)* António **Guterres**

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