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Strengthening the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union on issues of peace and security in Africa, including the work of the United Nations Office to the African Union

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report, submitted pursuant to the statement by the President of the Security Council dated 16 December 2014 ([S/PRST/2014/27](#)), provides an update on the key achievements and milestones in the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union on issues of peace and security in Africa, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security. The report includes an overview of the challenges to peace and security on the continent within the context of a polarized multilateral system, increasing global and regional power competition and fundamental challenges to international law, the continent's mounting debt burden and governance deficits, and the opportunities for collaboration and partnership between the United Nations and the African Union in addressing those challenges. The report also includes updates on the main activities carried out by the United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU) and the United Nations system, in relation to the partnership with the African Union, since the issuance of my previous report ([S/2023/629](#)) on 28 August 2023, including those pertaining to Security Council resolutions [2320 \(2016\)](#), [2378 \(2017\)](#), [2457 \(2019\)](#) and [2719 \(2023\)](#).

II. The United Nations and African Union strategic partnership

United Nations Security Council and African Union Peace and Security Council

2. The strategic partnership between the United Nations and the African Union continued to be strengthened, in order to more effectively address peace and security challenges in Africa. The United Nations Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council prioritized enhanced coordination and information-sharing, with the three African non-permanent members of the Security Council playing a critical facilitation and coordination role on issues of particular interest to Africa, including with respect to the adoption on 21 December 2023 of Security Council resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#), which established a framework for predictable



financing of African Union-led peace support operations authorized by the Security Council through United Nations-assessed contributions on a case-by-case basis.

3. On 5 and 6 October 2023, the members of the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council held their eighth joint informal seminar and the 17th annual joint consultative meeting in Addis Ababa. A joint communiqué was issued on 6 October 2023.

4. The joint informal seminar was focused on financing African Union-led peace support operations; youth, peace and security; and enhancing cooperation and working methods between the two Councils. Participants emphasized that security threats on the African continent require more robust interventions, including peace enforcement, accompanied by political efforts to advance peace. They took note of the implementation of the African Union Compliance and Accountability Framework, and the operationalization of the Peace Fund of the African Union. They stressed the importance of securing flexible, predictable and sustainable funding for peace operations and noted the ambition to support such efforts under the Peace Fund. Participants underscored the importance of advancing the youth, peace and security agenda and creating conducive conditions for meaningful participation of young people in peace processes.

5. The 17th annual joint consultative meeting was focused on the situations in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Sudan, the Sahel region, and Somalia and the activities of the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS). Participants strongly condemned the conflict in the Sudan between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces and expressed concern about the resulting dire humanitarian situation. They acknowledged the impact of climate change, unconstitutional changes of government, terrorism and armed criminal networks, especially in the Sahel region, and massive population displacements, calling for comprehensive approaches to mitigate the multidimensional impact on human security. Participants underscored the importance for the Government of Somalia to extend State authority in newly liberated areas and address the root causes of instability. They further reiterated their shared commitment to supporting national and regional efforts to degrade the Al-Shabaab group. With regard to the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, participants expressed deep concern about the insecurity, the deterioration of the humanitarian situation and human rights violations in the eastern part of the country. They also welcomed the efforts by neighbouring countries, including those made within the framework of the Luanda and Nairobi peace processes.

6. The seminar and the annual meeting were preceded by informal preparatory meetings of the Committee of Experts of the African Union Peace and Security Council and the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Security Council on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, held on 3 and 4 October 2023 in Addis Ababa. The meetings included detailed briefings during which representatives of the African Union Commission shared their analysis of and perspectives on peace and security issues.

7. The two Councils continued to strengthen coordination and information-sharing through monthly informal meetings between the Chairperson of the Peace and Security Council and the President of the Security Council, which were facilitated by the Peace and Security Council secretariat, UNOAU and the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. The number of monthly meetings increased to nine during the reporting period.

8. Special representatives and envoys of the United Nations and the African Union, as well as other senior officials, continued to deliver briefings to the two Councils, sometimes jointly, providing insight and analysis to inform decision-making. During the reporting period, UNOAU and other United Nations entities provided briefings to

the Peace and Security Council on 30 occasions, including at meetings held at the level of Heads of State and Government. The Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the African Union and Head of the United Nations Office to the African Union participated in the tenth African Union High-level Seminar on Peace and Security in Africa, held in Oran, Algeria, on 17 and 18 December 2023. The seminar was focused on key strategic issues concerning the two Councils, and on coordination matters between the Peace and Security Council and the three African non-permanent members of the Security Council.

9. On 12 October 2023, the Military Staff Committee of the Peace and Security Council and representatives of the Military Staff Committee of the United Nations held their first informal meeting at the African Union headquarters. The meeting enabled the two Committees to better understand their respective mandates, working methods and challenges, while laying the foundation for more effective collaboration to provide timely and informed advice to the two Councils.

United Nations Secretariat and African Union Commission

10. Under the partnership, the cooperation between the United Nations Secretariat and the African Union Commission, including between their special envoys and representatives, continued to be strengthened.

11. On 28 November 2023, the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission convened the seventh African Union-United Nations annual conference in New York to review progress in the implementation of the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security and the African Union-United Nations Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The meeting was focused on peace, security and development challenges in the Great Lakes, Sahel and Horn of Africa regions and in Libya, and the political transitions in Burkina Faso, Chad, Gabon, Guinea, Mali, the Niger and the Sudan. The Secretary-General and the Chairperson expressed concern about the ongoing challenges African countries face in attaining the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want.

12. At the annual conference, the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission signed the African Union-United Nations Joint Framework on Human Rights, underscoring the recognition that peace and security, development and human rights are intrinsically interlinked, mutually reinforcing and must be pursued simultaneously. The signing of the Joint Framework underscored the shared objectives and steadfast commitment of the United Nations and the African Union towards enhancing the respect, promotion and protection of human and peoples' rights, and facilitating joint action towards those objectives.

13. On 15 November 2023 and 29 May 2024, the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission convened the second and third African Union-United Nations high-level strategic dialogues on sustainable development, in New York and Addis Ababa, respectively. The strategic dialogues took stock of the progress made in the development of new mechanisms for strategic coordination within the context of the African Union-United Nations Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda. Participants reviewed the operationalization of the five "college-to-college" formations as a new method of working between African Union Commissioners and their United Nations counterparts.

14. The United Nations and the African Union held the 22nd and 23rd meetings of the Joint Task Force on Peace and Security on 18 September 2023 and 16 April 2024,

respectively, which were attended by the Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security of the African Union, the Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations, the Under-Secretaries-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, for Peace Operations and for Operational Support, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the African Union and Head of UNOAU, and the Assistant Secretary-General for Africa. Both meetings were focused on the most pressing peace and security challenges facing the continent. The Joint Task Force took note of the considerable progress in strengthening the partnership, including collaboration in supporting African Union peace support operations, and in conflict prevention initiatives.

15. On 16 October 2023, the African Union and the United Nations convened, for the first time, a joint retreat of the special representatives of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the special representatives and envoys of the Secretary-General, in Cairo. The retreat enabled the special representatives and envoys to develop a common understanding of threats to peace, security and governance in Africa; to strategize on coherent responses in the field, based on their comparative advantages; and to share lessons learned in the implementation of their respective mandates. The retreat was followed by the fourteenth high-level retreat of the African Union on the promotion of peace, security and stability in Africa, held on 17 and 18 October 2023, to which special representatives and envoys of the United Nations were invited.

III. The United Nations and African Union operational partnership

Challenges and opportunities for peace and security in Africa

16. The peace and security landscape in Africa continued to be marked by a polarized multilateral system, rising competition for global and regional power, increased competition for resources, asymmetric security threats, governance deficits and rapid advancements in technology. Several African countries continued to face significant structural challenges to achieving lasting peace, security and sustainable development, including key areas of the 2030 Agenda, such as the absence of effective State authority in some parts of the continent; mass unemployment, including among young people; organized crime, terrorism and violent extremism; political and socioeconomic exclusion, including gender inequality; the inequitable management of natural resources; food insecurity and hunger; and the inadequate delivery of basic services. These issues were exacerbated by crippling debt obligations, high energy and food prices and the impact of climate change. These factors continued to fuel tensions and conflict across the continent, adversely affecting progress towards the attainment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Agenda 2063. Six countries remained suspended by the African Union owing to unconstitutional changes of government, namely Burkina Faso, Gabon, Guinea, Mali, the Niger and the Sudan.

17. In the Sudan, fighting between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces intensified and expanded into new areas. The conflict has resulted in a grave humanitarian emergency, leading to the largest forced displacement crisis in the world with over 10 million displaced persons, including more than 2 million fleeing to neighbouring countries. The conflict has also precipitated acute food insecurity and a looming famine. Numerous peace initiatives, acknowledging the need for civilian voices to be at the forefront of any post-conflict settlement, have thus far failed to stop the fighting.

18. In Ethiopia, although the security situation in the northern Tigray region improved following the November 2022 Cessation of Hostilities Agreement, ongoing violent conflict in the Amhara and Oromia regions has led to a deterioration in the human rights and humanitarian situations, complicating efforts towards national reconciliation. The signing of a memorandum of understanding between Ethiopia and the “Somaliland” region of Somalia caused tensions between the two countries, threatening stability in the region. Talks between the two countries aimed at resolving the tensions started on 1 July 2024 under the auspices of the Government of Türkiye.

19. The security and humanitarian situation in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo worsened amid escalating military confrontations between the Mouvement du 23 mars (M23) armed group and the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC). The conflict continued to cause massive displacement, with over 8.7 million people in need of urgent humanitarian assistance, and a serious increase in human rights violations and abuses, including sexual violence. In that context, the deployment of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo began on 15 December 2023, one week after the termination of the mandate of the East African Community Regional Force, and has been conducting offensive operations – alongside FARDC – against M23. The situation has been further compounded by persisting tensions between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda, as well as a resurgence in tensions between Burundi and Rwanda, posing a risk of further regionalization of the conflict.

20. West Africa continued to grapple with complex political, security and development challenges, including unconstitutional changes of government, and threats, such as terrorism, violent extremism and intercommunal conflict, in particular in the Sahel. The impact of climate change and desertification has resulted in food insecurity, unprecedented population displacement and a debilitating humanitarian crisis.

21. On 28 January 2024, Burkina Faso, Mali and the Niger formally announced their withdrawal from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and on 16 September 2023 communicated, among other things, their decision to establish a mutual defence pact called the Alliance of Sahel States. On 6 July, during the first summit of the Alliance, the three Heads of State instituted the Confederation the Alliance of the of Sahel States. On 10 May 2024, the transitional authorities in Mali announced a three-year deferral of the transition timeline. That was followed by a similar announcement by the transitional authorities in Burkina Faso on 25 May 2024, delaying the return to constitutional order by five years. At its sixty-fifth ordinary session of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS, held on 7 July 2024 in Abuja, the Authority reaffirmed its commitment to constitutional order, while expressing disappointment with the lack of progress in engagement with the authorities of Burkina Faso, Mali and the Niger. The President of Senegal, Bassirou Diomaye Faye, was designated as the ECOWAS facilitator for engagement with the three countries, in collaboration with the President of Togo, Faure Gnassingbé. Meanwhile, the African Union Peace and Security Council engaged informally with representatives of the suspended countries to maintain a channel of communication.

22. The African Union Peace and Security Council and the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council held their first meeting on 24 April 2024, in an effort to strengthen relations. The two Councils, inter alia, expressed deep concern about the worsening insecurity resulting from the spread of terrorism and violent extremism in West Africa, in particular in the Sahel and the Lake Chad basin regions, as well as the resurgence of unconstitutional changes of government.

23. In the Central African Republic, there was progress in the implementation of the 2019 Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation and the 2021 joint road map

for peace of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, although the Coalition des patriotes pour le changement has yet to return to the peace and reconciliation process. Progress was made in devolving the implementation of the Political Agreement to the local level, with a view to involving local actors and communities in finding durable solutions to the root causes of local conflicts. The Government remained publicly committed to the peace process, and, in some instances, armed combatants affiliated with the Coalition des patriotes pour le changement voluntarily surrendered and requested to join the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme. The humanitarian situation in the north-eastern region was aggravated by an increase in the number of refugees crossing into the Central African Republic as a result of the conflict in the Sudan.

24. In Chad, a constitutional referendum was held on 17 December 2023, followed by presidential elections on 6 May 2024, bringing the political transition to an end. On 16 May, the Constitutional Council confirmed the victory of Mahamat Idriss Déby Itno in the election with 61 per cent of votes and a voter participation rate of 75 per cent. On 23 May, he was sworn in as President.

25. In Libya, the persisting political stalemate resulted in entrenched divisions, posing challenges for efforts to reunite the country and organize credible presidential and parliamentary elections to put in place unified, representative and legitimate Libyan institutions.

26. Meanwhile, the African Union institutional reform process continued. During the thirty-seventh Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads and Government of the African Union, held in February 2024, the President of Rwanda, Paul Kagame, handed over leadership of the process to the President of Kenya, William Ruto. In his final report as leader of the process, President Kagame noted accomplishments in the reform process, citing the revitalization of the Peace Fund as an example, but added that the African Union still had a long way to go to be the strong organization envisaged by Africa.

Partnership in conflict prevention and peacemaking

27. Within the context of the complex peace and security environment outlined above, the United Nations continued to underscore that close collaboration and partnership with the African Union, regional economic communities and regional mechanisms, as well as with other partners in conflict prevention and peacemaking, is an absolute necessity.

28. In November 2023, the Secretary-General appointed Ramtane Lamamra as his Personal Envoy for the Sudan. The Personal Envoy has since engaged with the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces on the need for them to commit to an immediate cessation of hostilities, to protect civilians and civilian infrastructure, and to facilitate humanitarian operations. He has worked in close coordination with international and regional partners, including the joint African Union-Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) High-level Panel on the Sudan, the League of Arab States and other multilateral and bilateral partners, towards ensuring coordinated peace initiatives to resolve the crisis and return to an inclusive and civilian-led political transition.

29. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the President of Angola, João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço, continued to undertake mediation efforts as the African Union champion for peace and reconciliation in Africa, through the Luanda process, to de-escalate tensions between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda. On 5 July, a 15-day humanitarian truce in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo was announced and, despite some violations, was subsequently extended to 3 August. Following an initial meeting of the foreign ministers of Angola, the Democratic

Republic of the Congo and Rwanda, where they committed to work towards a cessation of hostilities and strengthened confidence-building measures, including addressing the long-standing issue of the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR), a second ministerial meeting was held on 30 July in Luanda. Facilitated by the Foreign Minister of Angola, the meeting led to a ceasefire agreement effective 4 August and established a plan for neutralizing FDLR and the disengagement of forces. The ceasefire will be monitored by the ad hoc verification mechanism, strengthened by intelligence experts from the three countries and supported by the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, at the request of Angola.

30. In Libya, the African Union, the United Nations, neighbouring countries and international partners continued efforts in support of the political process. While divisions among the political and security actors in eastern and western Libya remained a major obstacle to organizing national elections, the joint African Union and United Nations efforts contributed to sustaining the ceasefire of 20 October 2020, preventing a return to full-blown conflict. Despite intensive preparations for the convening of the intra-Libyan national reconciliation conference on 28 April 2024, the lack of consensus among political actors led to the suspension of the planned conference and set back efforts to promote national reconciliation.

31. In Sierra Leone, ECOWAS, the African Union and the United Nations undertook a joint assessment mission from 18 to 21 June 2024, which contributed to easing tensions and overcoming a protracted political impasse. On 1 July, the cross-party committee submitted a report on the review of electoral systems and management bodies to the President of Sierra Leone, Julius Maada Bio. In Chad, the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), working closely with the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the African Union and other partners, remained actively engaged in the post-transition process. Concerted efforts need to be sustained in promoting inclusivity, respect for political, civic, social and economic rights and meaningful participation of political opponents, women and young people in governance institutions and political processes.

32. The partnership between the African Union and the United Nations on climate, peace and security deepened during the reporting period, in particular between the revitalized African Union climate security cluster and the United Nations climate security mechanism. Highlights included the first interdepartmental retreat on climate, peace and security convened by the African Union Commission on 11 May 2024, as well as collaboration towards the development of the common African position on climate, peace and security. This work built on the consultative process conducted as part of the African continental climate security risk assessment, as requested by the African Union Peace and Security Council. The Peace and Security Council met on 7 November 2023 to consider the report of the Chairperson on the nexus between climate change, peace and security and the climate security risk assessment, expressed “deep concern over the effects of climate change in Africa, in particular those related to peace and security” and reiterated the need to develop a common African position.

33. Child protection of children in armed conflict was further advanced under the partnership. The United Nations provided technical support and advice leading up to the ministerial-level session of the African Union Peace and Security Council on the promotion and protection of the rights and welfare of children in situations of conflict in Africa, which was held on 4 and 5 December 2023 in Banjul. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict briefed the meeting participants. The United Nations provided the African Union with further technical support in mainstreaming child protection in early warning and mediation. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed

Conflict, with support from UNOAU, also partnered with the African Union Youth Envoy on developing a youth-led continental outreach campaign on the misuse of social media and related risks for conflict-affected children, which was launched in February 2024.

34. In 2023, the African Women Leaders Network launched 5 national-level chapters in Equatorial Guinea, the Gambia, Madagascar, Rwanda and Somalia, bringing the number of national chapters to 36. The Network conducted joint solidarity missions to the Gambia and the Sudan and held advocacy events for women's representation in peacemaking in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Sudan. Furthermore, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and the African Women Leaders Network provided support to the African Union Commission in drafting the African Union convention to end violence against women and girls.

Partnership in peacekeeping and peace support operations

35. The United Nations, including through UNOAU, remained continuously engaged with the African Union and regional economic communities and regional mechanisms to support ongoing and potential peacekeeping and peace support operations on the African continent.

36. In Somalia, the United Nations continued to support the efforts of the African Union to ensure a seamless security transition from ATMIS to the Somali security forces and the planning for an African Union-led presence in Somalia post-2024, including through the provision of expert advice and logistical support. The Department of Operational Support, supported by UNOAU, further collaborated with ATMIS troop-contributing countries in relation to the ATMIS equipment review exercise conducted in 2022, in order to realize the recommended generation and deployment of additional capacities and capabilities, including military helicopters and level 2 hospital and air surveillance asset capacities. UNOAU also supported the assessment of police capabilities in Ghana, Kenya and Zambia for deployment to ATMIS. On 7 August, the African Union Peace and Security Council issued a communiqué in which it endorsed the establishment of a new post-ATMIS mission to be known as the African Union Support and Stabilization Mission in Somalia, and adopted its concept of operations. In its resolution [2748 \(2024\)](#), adopted on 15 August 2024, the Security Council requested the Secretary-General, jointly with the African Union Commission Chairperson and in consultation with Somalia and international stakeholders, to report on the overall mission design for the proposed successor mission.

37. In the Lake Chad basin, the United Nations, including through the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa, the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel and UNOAU, provided technical advice and expertise to the Lake Chad Basin Commission on the implementation of the Regional Strategy for the Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience of the Boko Haram-affected Areas of the Lake Chad Basin Region. Support was also provided to the Multinational Joint Task Force, to enhance its continued operational readiness and facilitate logistical support with regard to its efforts to counter Boko Haram-affiliated and splinter groups. The United Nations also supported the African Union in the review of its stabilization guidelines in January 2024, following a request from the African Union Peace and Security Council, in order to accelerate the development of a policy on stabilization, using the Lake Chad Basin Commission as a model to inform the design and development of similar mechanisms for stabilization operations on the continent.

38. At its 1203rd meeting on 4 March 2024, the African Union Peace and Security Council endorsed the deployment of the Southern African Development Community

Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the eastern region of the country and requested the Security Council to provide material and financial resources to enable the Mission to effectively discharge its mandate. Following the submission by the Secretary-General on 28 June of a letter to the Security Council outlining possible ways in which the United Nations could support the Mission within the parameters set by Council resolution [2717 \(2023\)](#), the Security Council adopted its resolution [2746 \(2024\)](#), in which it authorized MONUSCO to provide limited logistical and operational support to the Mission through enhanced cooperation, information-sharing, technical assistance and the use of MONUSCO logistical assets and military capabilities.

39. Following the adoption of Security Council resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#) on the predictable financing of African Union-led peace support operations, the Secretary-General established a task force within the United Nations, led by the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations to coordinate the efforts of the Secretariat and its engagement with the African Union towards the implementation of the resolution. Subsequently, a senior-level technical task team was established to support the work of the task force. The task team and its African Union counterpart have since met on several occasions, in person and virtually, to deliberate and agree on a joint United Nations-African Union road map determining the way forward for the implementation of the resolution, including in relation to joint planning, decision-making and reporting, mission support, financing and budgeting, and compliance and protection of civilians. Throughout their engagement on the matter, the two sides continued to reiterate their commitment to deepen collaboration towards greater institutional and operational readiness to finalize the joint road map and to continue to make progress in its implementation. The joint road map is expected to be adopted during the next annual conference of the two organizations, to be held in October 2024. As requested by the Security Council, a separate report on the operationalization of resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#) will be submitted by the end of 2024.

40. Meanwhile, the United Nations continued to support the African Union in enhancing its capacity to ensure that its peace support operations are planned and managed in compliance with international human rights law, including regional human rights instruments and international humanitarian law, as well as with applicable standards of conduct and discipline. To that effect, the United Nations participated in the following meetings held in Addis Ababa: the consultative session on the case management process for African Union peace support operations, held from 9 to 11 October 2023; the working session with troop- and police-contributing countries and regional economic communities and regional mechanisms on strengthening the selection and screening processes for personnel in African Union peace support operations, held on 8 and 9 May 2024; and the consultative session with the African Union Commission, regional economic communities and regional mechanisms, troop- and police-contributing countries and African Union peace support operations on strengthening the investigative processes and mechanisms for addressing misconduct, held on 13 and 14 May 2024. The United Nations also provided technical expertise in developing the African Union guidelines for case management in peace support operations, which were subsequently adopted at the sixteenth meeting of the African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Defence, Safety and Security, held on 5 June 2024.

41. The United Nations also worked with the African Union on the development of a joint planning document for African Union peace support operations. The document, which is expected to be jointly finalized with the African Union by December 2024, will outline processes, procedures and modalities to strengthen linkages between the two organizations and help align respective practices and procedures in the context of joint planning for peace operations.

42. In September 2023, the African Union Commission and the Department of Operational Support signed a memorandum of intent to strengthen collaboration in the provision of logistical support to the African Standby Force and future African Union peace support operations. Accordingly, the development of agreements between the United Nations and the African Union for technical support in various areas is ongoing.

43. Furthermore, the Department of Operational Support, in collaboration with UNOAU, continued to work with the African Union to strengthen cooperation and deepen mutual understanding on operational support matters through the revitalized knowledge and expertise exchange programme. In September 2023, the Department and the African Union Commission signed an updated memorandum of understanding on the programme, formalizing its expanded scope, while maintaining the original commitment to exchange and deepen knowledge and expertise on operational support matters. Since the expansion of the programme in 2021, over 60 practitioners from both organizations have participated in joint learning initiatives, including the hosting of African Union participants in the United Nations Enhanced Training for High-level Operational Support programme in 2024; the delivery of an organizational governance programme tailored to specific needs; and the joint development of an operational synergy training programme for the African Union-United Nations resource programme.

44. Moreover, in support of the efforts of the African Union to revitalize its Peace Fund, the United Nations, through UNOAU, worked closely with the Peace Fund secretariat on the development of policy documents, including standard operating procedures and guidelines. The Department of Operational Support also provided capacity support to the secretariat through the deployment of technical expertise in financial management and strategic communications.

Partnership in peacebuilding and the rule of law

45. The United Nations maintained a strong collaboration with the African Union on initiatives related to peacebuilding, in particular security sector reform, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and mine action.

46. On 13 November 2023, the Peacebuilding Commission and the African Union Peace and Security Council held, in a hybrid format, their sixth annual informal consultative meeting, which served to explore opportunities for enhancing cooperation with a view to supporting the African Union's peacebuilding efforts. Participants underlined the importance of national ownership, leadership and the full participation of all strata of society, including women and young people, in peacebuilding initiatives. They reaffirmed the importance of ensuring adequate, predictable and sustained financing for peacebuilding, noting that voluntary contributions had not been sufficient to meet demand. In May 2024, the Peacebuilding Commission agreed to the participation of the African Union at all meetings of the Commission.

47. The United Nations supported the African Union in furthering the implementation of its security sector reform policy framework, including assisting in the organization of events aimed at reviewing lessons learned from the 10 previous years of activities and proposing recommendations on the way forward. In 2023, the African Union organized three activities as part of its "Decade of implementation of the African Union security sector reform policy framework: successes, challenges and perspectives for the future". The African Union conducted a review of nationally led security sector reform processes, in collaboration with five member States, which provided critical perspectives for discussion during the conference on African Union security sector reform, held on 21 and 22 November 2023 in Addis Ababa. The fifth

annual meeting of the African Union security sector reform steering committee was held on 22 and 23 November 2023 in Addis Ababa and served to discuss the findings and recommendations of the review. Moreover, UNOAU provided technical advice for the development of two African Union operational guidance notes, in addition to supporting the finalization of the training curriculum package on gender mainstreaming and security sector reform.

48. On 19 October 2023, the African Union, in collaboration with UNOAU, the Department of Peace Operations and the World Bank Group, launched the fourth phase of the African Union disarmament, demobilization and reintegration capacity project, whose implementation would cover the period 2023–2025. This phase is focused on operational support and on the political aspects and preventative role of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. Within the framework of the fourth phase, UNOAU supported several African Union events, including a side event held on 13 February 2024 on the margins of the African Union Summit, in line with the African Union theme for 2024, namely “Educate and skill Africa for the twenty-first century”, which served to underscore the importance of the right to education and its role in strengthening resilience to prevent and mitigate recurring patterns of violent conflict and the formation of armed groups.

49. Furthermore, UNOAU provided support for other events focused on strengthening operational linkages between early warning and conflict response, by using disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, as well as human rights, as initial points of entry.

IV. Partnership with other regional organizations and arrangements

Regional economic communities and regional mechanisms

50. The United Nations and the African Union worked closely with the regional economic communities and regional mechanisms in Africa to leverage the relative strengths of each organization towards effective peace and security responses.

51. In the Great Lakes region, efforts continued with respect to the quadripartite process facilitated by the African Union, comprising the Economic Community of Central African States, the East African Community, SADC and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, and the revitalization of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region. These processes presented opportunities for a coordinated political approach and enhanced support to the Luanda and Nairobi processes in support of peace in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. Pursuant to the decisions taken at the quadripartite summit held in Luanda on 27 June 2023, the United Nations participated in a meeting of the chiefs of defence staff of the quadripartite mechanism on the joint framework on coordination and harmonization of regional peace initiatives in eastern Democratic of the Congo, convened on 6 October 2023, in collaboration with the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and under the auspices of the African Union Commission.

52. In South Sudan, the trilateral task force on permanent constitution-making and electoral processes support, comprising the African Union, IGAD and the United Nations, played a crucial role in supporting the peace process. The task force mediated between parties to resolve tensions and break political deadlocks, including in the context of the Government-trilateral joint task force on the implementation of constitution-making and electoral processes and in the convening on 22 and

23 February 2024 of the first formal consultative dialogue among the key national entities involved in facilitating elections.

Other regional organizations and arrangements

53. The African Union and the United Nations also made progress in their trilateral cooperation with the European Union. On 17 September 2023, the leaders of the three organizations held their fourth trilateral meeting, where they discussed the situations in the Sahel, the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes region, migration, the predictable financing of African Union-led peace support operations and the acceleration of a just transition and climate justice. Moreover, the tripartite project for the enhancement and operationalization of the African Union Compliance and Accountability Framework for Peace Support Operations marked its third year. While there was significant progress in the development and adoption of various policy documents, the focus of the project was shifted toward the framework's implementation.

V. Other activities of the United Nations Office to the African Union

54. UNOAU remained the key facilitator of the strategic partnership between the United Nations and the African Union in terms of peace and security, and strove to facilitate a coherent, well-informed and strategic United Nations approach to advancing the partnership between the two organizations across the conflict cycle. At the same time, all United Nations entities working on peace and security in Africa further prioritized working with the African Union in their own operations. Under the leadership of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the African Union and Head of the United Nations Office to the African Union, the Office developed and nurtured strong and enduring relationships with the African Union, based on the shared values and principles laid out in the joint frameworks and on a recognition of the immense responsibilities placed on the African Union, African Governments and other stakeholders and partners, to deliver on the promises of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063.

55. Strategic alignment and coherence between the two organizations require continuous engagement with the leadership of the African Union Commission. UNOAU holds strategic dialogues at the beginning of the year with the African Union Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security and senior staff to reflect on the experiences of the preceding year and discuss priorities for the year ahead. At the dialogue that was held on 20 February 2024, the Commissioner underscored the value of interinstitutional collaboration to strengthen peace and security in Africa. African Union representatives emphasized the need to foster greater coherence, noting that the partnership was vital to meeting the peace, security and development goals of the African continent. These interactions continued throughout the year, at both the strategic and technical levels.

56. UNOAU continued to support interaction between the African Union Commission and the United Nations, including interactions with regional presences, by facilitating briefings and exchanges of information with the special representatives, special envoys and personal envoys of the Secretary-General. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the African Union regularly engaged with Addis Ababa-based Permanent Representatives of States members of the African Union, including through monthly meetings with the Chairperson of the Peace and Security Council and other diplomatic missions. The Special Representative participated in the tenth High-Level Seminar on Peace and Security in Africa, which took place in Oran, Algeria, on 17 and 18 December 2023, as well

as the second African Union policy conference, held on 21 February 2024 in Tangier, Morocco.

57. From 26 to 30 September 2023, the Special Representative led a United Nations inter-agency mission to Madagascar, ahead of the presidential election held on 9 November. The mission met with several key national stakeholders, including the incumbent President of Madagascar, Andry Rajoelina, members of the Government, opposition candidates and representatives of the High Constitutional Court and the independent national electoral commission, as well as actors from civil society and the diplomatic community. After returning to Addis Ababa, the Special Representative met with the African Union Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security to share insights and ensure alignment between the United Nations and the African Union. In this context, The Special Representative also met with representatives of SADC.

58. The Special Representative attended the summit of the Committee of Ten Heads of State and Government of the African Union on the Reform of the United Nations Security Council, held in Oyala, Equatorial Guinea from 22 to 24 November 2023. The meeting provided an opportunity for the Committee of Ten to take stock of the progress achieved and assess opportunities for advancing the reform agenda. At the summit, participants adopted an action plan and recommitted to enhancing intergovernmental negotiations, including with other regional groups.

59. The Special Representative also participated in the second African Union Reflection Forum on Unconstitutional Changes of Government in Africa, held in Accra on 18 and 19 March 2024, during which participants discussed the structural drivers of such changes of government, while advancing solutions to safeguard democracy on the continent.

60. UNOAU provided support to the African Union and the regional economic communities and regional mechanisms in strengthening the African Standby Force through collaboration in capacity-development initiatives. In December 2023, UNOAU supported ECOWAS in the review of its standby force operational framework, developed in 2005, to ensure readiness and adaptability to address conflict and political dynamics in the region, including threats, such as terrorism, governance deficits, unconstitutional changes of government, piracy, climate change and natural and human-induced disasters. UNOAU provided support to the ECOWAS Standby Force in developing a training policy for ECOWAS peace support operations and in training military, police and civilian personnel in the protection of civilians in armed conflict. UNOAU also supported the delivery of train-the-trainer programmes on the African Union Compliance and Accountability Framework for Peace Support Operations, covering international humanitarian law, international human rights law and conduct and discipline for the personnel of all the regional standby forces.

61. UNOAU also provided support to the African Union in revising the latter's training policy in line with the evolution of African Union peace support operations. This included the development of a comprehensive framework for training based on lessons learned in African Union peace support operations and the operationalization of the African Standby Force. The Office supported the African Union in the design and delivery of 32 training programmes in various knowledge areas targeting military, police and civilian personnel, as part of the African Standby Force, and those preparing to deploy or currently deployed in African Union peace support operations. UNOAU continued to provide technical support and advice to the African Union through its participation in the Military, Police and Civilian Strategic Support Groups, and in the strategic review and concept formulation of the African Standby Force support concept.

62. UNOAU also supported the African Union Commission in the review of assessment and selection criteria for professional staff within police services, individual police officers and formed police units, so as to ensure a standardized approach across all regions and member States. UNOAU also provided support for the review of existing human resources policies, optimizing related processes and collaborating with key stakeholders to draft a detailed manual for both the African Union Commission headquarters and its field missions.

63. UNOAU continued to support African Union efforts to advance the implementation of Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) on women and peace and security. In that context, the Office provided technical and advisory support, including for the African Union high-level mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo to prevent election-related violence, for the activities undertaken by the Network of African Women in Conflict Prevention and Mediation (FemWise-Africa) and the Panel of the Wise in Senegal and for the participation of Sudanese women in the peace processes of their country. Joint activities were organized to address gender-related issues in security sector reform, the participation of women in elections and the need to end violence against women and girls. Other engagements included the provision of technical support to the fourth Africa Forum on Women, Peace and Security, held on 13 and 14 December 2023 in Addis Ababa. The Forum was focused on providing technical support for women's participation in peace processes and decision-making. UNOAU also provided policy support for initiatives aimed at combating conflict-related sexual violence.

64. In an effort to build public awareness as a tool for conflict prevention, UNOAU provided technical support for the establishment of the three-dimensional African Union virtual human rights memorial, which will serve as a complement to the physical human rights memorial currently under construction at the African Union headquarters.

65. From April to July 2024, the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, in collaboration with the Department of Peace Operations and the Department of Operational Support conducted an independent strategic and civilian staffing review of UNOAU, pursuant to General Assembly resolution [77/262](#), adopted on 30 December 2022, considering the different sources of funding for the Office and in view of the growing partnership with the African Union. The Secretary-General will revert to the General Assembly on the implications of the review.

Observations and recommendations

66. As I have stated throughout my tenure as Secretary-General, strong and enduring partnerships between the United Nations and the African Union, as well as other regional organizations, are the bedrock of effective multilateralism, and are essential in addressing today's complex and evolving threats. I remain deeply concerned about increasing global and regional power competition, the deep sense of growing unease that Governments and international organizations are failing to deliver for people around the world, in particular young people, and the sense that social contracts between Governments and the governed in many countries are under stress. Adding to these challenges is what I referred to as "a series of interlocking threats" in my policy brief entitled "A New Agenda for Peace", including the evolving nature of conflict, insufficient progress on the 2030 Agenda, rising inequalities within and between nations, shrinking civic space and the climate emergency, all of which are having a visible effect in Africa.

67. The Summit of the Future, to be held on 22 and 23 September 2024, presents an opportunity for Member States to act with common purpose and a sense of urgency to rebuild multilateralism, including a more effective and inclusive collective security

system, underpinned by strong partnerships with regional organizations, like the African Union. In this regard, I remain convinced that a fairer representation of Africa in a reformed Security Council, with permanent African membership, will significantly contribute to enhancing its legitimacy and effectiveness.

68. The peace and security situation across the continent underscores the necessity to strengthen conflict prevention. However, as I emphasized in my policy brief on A New Agenda for Peace, this requires an urgent shift in approach, with all States agreeing to recognize and commit to the goals of preventing conflict and sustaining peace. There must be greater efforts towards sustainable development, and a shift in the paradigm of preventing conflict and sustaining peace, to place greater emphasis on actions and responsibility at the national level, with the commensurate investment in terms of human and financial resources and a political commitment to ensure results. The African Union has, commendably, developed the tools to prevent conflict, through the African Peace and Security Architecture and the African Governance Architecture. These tools should be strengthened to enable them to reach their full potential in preventing tensions and disputes from developing into violent conflicts.

69. I am deeply worried by the continued deterioration of the security situation in the Sahel. I am also concerned about the countries in West and Central Africa that have recently undergone unconstitutional changes of government. I take note of the decision of Burkina Faso, Mali and the Niger to withdraw from ECOWAS and create the Alliance of the Sahel States and, in this context, welcome the designation by the Authority of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS of the President of Senegal, Bassirou Diomaye Faye, as its facilitator in engagement with those three countries, in collaboration with the President of Togo, Faure Gnassingbé. I also welcome the collaboration between the African Union and ECOWAS in addressing these issues, including through enhanced cooperation and collaboration between the Mediation and Security Council of ECOWAS and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. My Special Representative for West Africa and the Sahel will continue to be actively engaged to support these efforts.

70. The situation in the Sudan has worsened markedly since my previous report. The conflict has led to the world's largest displacement and hunger crisis. I urge the leadership of the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces to place the higher interests of the Sudanese people above all others and commit to a cessation of hostilities, unfettered humanitarian access and political dialogue. My Personal Envoy for the Sudan will continue to spare no effort in advancing a peaceful resolution of the conflict, working closely with the joint African Union-IGAD high-level panel, the League of Arab States and other multilateral partners, and ensuring coordination and complementarity between those organizations and other partners.


71. With regard to the situation in Somalia, I commend the continued efforts of the Somali security forces and ATMIS to degrade Al-Shabaab and pay tribute to their sacrifices. I remain concerned about the continued funding shortfall of ATMIS and call upon partners to provide additional contributions to ensure that the Mission can effectively deliver on its mandate. I welcome the work undertaken by the Federal Government of Somalia and the African Union to plan a follow-on mission to ATMIS and reiterate the need for predictable and sustainable financing for the mission.

72. I welcome the ceasefire in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo that went into effect on 4 August and call upon all parties to fully respect its terms. I reiterate the urgency in reversing the humanitarian crisis and averting the regionalization of the conflict. I remain convinced of the viability of ongoing dialogue and political initiatives, including the Luanda and the Nairobi processes and the quadripartite process facilitated by the African Union, and call for the sustained support of the Security Council in the search for durable solutions.

73. The adoption of Security Council resolution [2719 \(2023\)](#) represented a significant milestone toward ensuring predictable and sustainable funding for African Union-led peace support operations. The resolution provides tremendous scope to deepen the partnership in peace and security between the African Union and the United Nations under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. I commend the Security Council in providing an avenue that enables it to better leverage the capacities of regional arrangements to more effectively fulfil its responsibilities under the Charter.

74. The partnership between the United Nations and the African Union has grown steadily over recent years, including through joint frameworks covering peace and security, development and, most recently, human rights. In growing this strategic and institutionalized partnership, the United Nations has had a dependable and like-minded partner in the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat. As he nears the end of his term of office, I would like to pay tribute to Mr. Faki Mahamat for his leadership and commitment to an enhanced partnership between our two organizations. I also express my appreciation to other organs of the African Union, African Member States and the regional economic communities and regional mechanisms for their efforts and collaboration towards addressing challenges to peace, security and development in Africa.


75. Finally, I wish to express my appreciation to my Special Representative to the African Union, Parfait Onanga-Anyanga, and to the staff of UNOAU and all United Nations and African Union entities, for their important role in continuing to foster a strong partnership between the two organizations in terms of peace and security.











UNITED NATIONS - AFRICAN UNION PARTNERSHIP

IN CONFLICT PREVENTION AND MEDIATION, PEACEKEEPING AND PEACEBUILDING

August 2023–July 2024



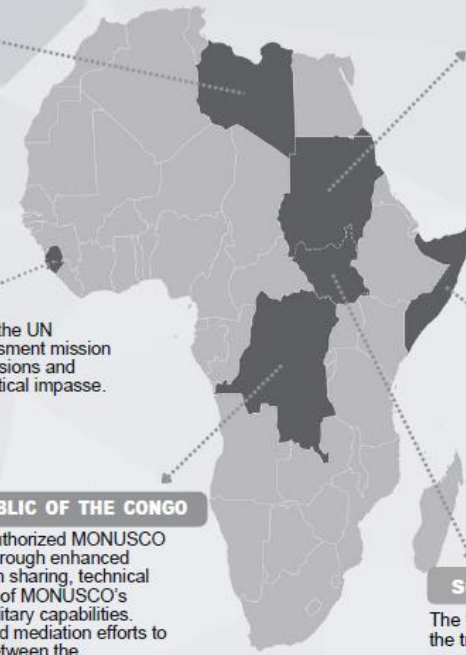
POLICY DIALOGUE

-  1 Annual Joint Consultative Meetings between the Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council
-  1 informal meeting of the Peace and Security Council Military Staff Committee and representatives of the Security Council Military Staff Committee
-  9 informal coordination meetings between the incoming President of the Security Council and the Chairperson of the Peace and Security Council, facilitated by the AU and the UN
-  1 consultative meeting between the Peace and Security Council and the UN Peacebuilding Commission
-  28 UN briefings to the Peace and Security Council
-  1 UN-AU Annual Conference between the Secretary-General and the AUC Chairperson
-  2 meetings of the UN-AU joint task force on peace and security
-  1 joint retreat of the AU and UN special representatives and envoys

"The peace and security situation across the continent underscores the necessity to strengthen conflict prevention [...] plac[ing] greater emphasis on actions and responsibility at the national level."

I commend the Security Council [for] the adoption of resolution 2719 (2023) establish[ing] a framework for predictable financing of African Union-led peace support operations authorized by the Security Council.

Secretary-General António Guterres



LIBYA

The efforts of the UN and the AU contributed to sustaining the 2020 ceasefire, however divisions among the political actors set back efforts to promote national reconciliation.

THE SUDAN

The UN, the AU, IGAD and partners continued to seek opportunities for coordinated efforts to secure an immediate cessation of hostilities, ensure the unhindered passage of humanitarian relief and the protection of civilians, and advance a Sudanese-led political process.

SIERRA LEONE

ECOWAS, the AU and the UN undertook a joint assessment mission contributing to ease tensions and unlock a protracted political impasse.

SOMALIA

The UN supported efforts to ensure a seamless security transition from ATMIS to the Somali security forces and the planning for ATMIS follow-on mission post-2024.











DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

The Security Council authorized MONUSCO to support SAMIDRC through enhanced cooperation, information sharing, technical assistance and the use of MONUSCO's logistical assets and military capabilities. Angola continued to lead mediation efforts to de-escalate tensions between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda, resulting in a ceasefire agreement effective 4 August 2024.

SOUTH SUDAN

The UN, IGAD and the AU supported the trilateral task force on permanent constitution-making and electoral processes support to help resolve tensions and break political deadlocks among key national stakeholders.


COMMITMENTS

-  The Security Council adopted resolution 2719 (2023) on AU-led peace support operations. Subsequently, the UN and AU task teams prepared a draft joint roadmap on the operationalization of the resolution.
-  The Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the AU Commission signed the AU-UN Joint Framework on Human Rights, underscoring the recognition that peace and security, development and human rights are intrinsically interlinked and mutually reinforcing.
-  The UN provided technical support to AU's deployments of women mediators to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Senegal prior to national elections.
-  The African Women Leaders Network launched 5 new national chapters.
-  The UN and the AU continued to expand staff exchanges on operational support matters.
-  The UN and the AU increased cooperation on climate, peace and security; child protection; and security sector reform.
-  The UN assisted the AU in the design and delivery of 32 training programmes.
-  The UN continued supporting the AU in the implementation of the AU Compliance and Accountability Framework.
-  The UN continued providing technical support to AU peace support operations, African troop- and police-contributing countries and the strengthening of the African Standby Force.
-  The UN carried out an independent strategic and civilian staffing review of UNOAU.

Abbreviations: ATMIS, African Union Transition Mission in Somalia; AU, African Union; AUC, African Union Commission; ECOWAS, Economic Community of West African States; IGAD, Intergovernmental Authority on Development; MONUSCO, United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; SAMIDRC, Southern African Development Community Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; UN, United Nations; UNOAU, United Nations Office to the African Union.

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Final boundary between the Sudan and South Sudan has not yet been determined.

For more information, visit dppa.un.org, peacekeeping.un.org and unsoau.unmissions.org.



**PREVENTING CONFLICT
KEEPING THE PEACE
SUSTAINING PEACE**