

Peace and Security Council Report

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Current members of the Peace and Security Council: Algeria, Angola, Cameroon, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, the Gambia, Guinea, Lesotho, Mozambique, Nigeria, Tanzania and Uganda.

Peace and Security Council Protocol

'The PSC shall encourage non-governmental organizations to participate actively in the efforts aimed at promoting peace, security and stability in Africa. When required such organizations may be invited to address the Peace and Security Council' – Article 20 of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the PSC of the African Union.

Early warning issues for June 2013

During June the security situation in Nigeria and possible retaliation by Boko Haram in the wake of the government crackdown needs close monitoring. Events in Kenya, following the election in that deeply polarised society, are also troubling, as are recent reports about killings on the Kenyan–Ethiopian border by a militia group. In North Africa the

aftermath of the uprisings has yet to run its full course in Tunisia, Libya and Egypt. In Madagascar the constitutional crisis remains an obstacle to future peace and stability. In Guinea, where elections are scheduled to take place on 30 June despite strong objections by opposition forces, violent civil unrest appears likely.

► Current PSC Chair

Bio data: H.E. Rachid Benlounes
Current posts: Algeria's Ambassador to Ethiopia
Permanent Representative to the AU and UNECA
Chair of the PSC

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Livingstone formula

'Civil Society Organizations may provide technical support to the African Union by undertaking early warning reporting, and situation analysis which feeds information into the decision-making process of the PSC' – PSC/PR/(CLX), 5 December 2008, Conclusions of a Retreat of the PSC on a mechanism of interaction between the Council and CSOs.

Country analysis

SOMALIA

Previous PSC and AU Communiqués

The Peace and Security Council (PSC) held its 375th meeting on 10 May 2013 during which the Commissioner for Peace and Security briefed members on recent developments in Somalia and the progress being made in the consolidation of the state and restoration of normalcy in the country. The communiqué (PSC/PR/COMM.1 (CCCLXXV)) of the meeting welcomed progress being made in Somalia, particularly, in resolving outstanding issues about the provisional federal constitution; efforts to rebuild the armed forces of Somalia and integrate defecting militias; and discussions on the status of Somaliland.

The communiqué also welcomed the outcomes of the recent London Conference on Somalia held on 7 May 2013, under the auspices of the British Government, to discuss the way forward for Somalia. The PSC, however, urged partners at the meeting to honour their commitments and to ensure effective follow-up of important decisions made.

The Council also commended the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) for its contribution towards peace and stability, but took the opportunity to call on the United Nations (UN) and other partners to provide greater support in equipping the mission with the requisite equipment to enable it to achieve its goal of consolidating stability in the liberated areas.

On the issues emerging from UN Security Council Resolution 2093 (2013), which requested the AU to provide regular updates on the implementation of the AMISOM's mandate, the PSC requested that a report be submitted in 30 days. As part of this process, the Council also took note of the planned

establishment of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Somalia (UNSOM) and expressed appreciation for the work of Ambassador Augustine Mahiga, Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), who is being replaced.

Crisis escalation potential

Since the establishment of Somalia's new government in September 2012, there has been notable progress in the areas of security and the advancement of political processes in the country. Regarding security, there has been some extension of security beyond Mogadishu and commendable military successes by AMISOM and its allied forces. The most visible political achievement is in the successful inauguration of the Prime Minister Abdi Farah Shirdon Saaid and his cabinet, including the first female Foreign Minister for Somalia.

The leadership of the country has since gained express recognition from a number of Western countries, including the United States. The president has also made a number of high-level international visits to Addis Ababa, Ankara, Brussels, Cairo, Doha, Kampala, London, Nairobi, Riyadh and Washington in line with its commitment to adopt a robust international relations policy. In addition to initiatives towards political and judicial reforms, the government so far appears to be laying the necessary foundation for reconstructing Somalia with clearly articulated areas of focus. The new government has outlined (i) the establishment of functioning institutions; (ii) the spearheading of economic recovery; (iii) the promotion of sustainable peace; (iv) the provision of services to citizens; (v) the undertaking of robust international relations; and (vi) working towards reconciliation, political dialogue and national unity, as the six priority tasks of the administration.

Despite progress, however, Al-Shabaab still remains the primary

threat to the survival of the new Somali government and the realisation of peace in the country. As was anticipated, the group's primary strategy has shifted from direct engagement with the military forces to the use of guerrilla-style tactics involving targeted attacks through bombing, use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and suicide bombings. Targets have included journalists and symbols of Somali statehood, including the Courts and the airport. The last major coordinated attacks by Al-Shabaab in this line of strategy took place on Sunday 14 April 2013. These attacks involved the coordinated use of car bombings at the airport, suicide bombings and shootings at the Supreme Court that resulted in the deaths of more than thirty people and more than 50 injured.

The complexity of the operation and the involvement of suspected foreign members of Al-Shabaab have pointed to the capacity of the group, the nature of the threat posed to the attainment of peace in the country, and the overall difficulties surrounding the security stabilisation in the country. The evolution of the Islamist group appears to be aiming at a future objective where it might not be in charge of the country, but where it could make the country ungovernable by dictating the dynamics of security on the ground and the threat perception of citizens and development partners.

The latter particularly raises questions about the ability of emerging security structures to address the increasing sophistication and evolution of Al-Shabaab. This is particularly important given threats by Ethiopia to pull out troops from Somalia. In an address to parliament on 23 April 2013, the Prime Minister of Ethiopia indicated that Ethiopian troops would be withdrawn from Somalia soon. The basis for this decision is that despite repeated requests for African Union troops to relieve Ethiopian troops, and assume responsibility for areas that the latter are currently holding, there has been

no response. The high cost of Ethiopia's involvement in Somalia is another factor that has influenced this decision. The EU largely funds the African Union forces in Somalia. However, as Ethiopian forces do not operate under the auspices of the African Union mission, they are self-funded.

Following a recent unexpected unilateral withdrawal by Ethiopian troops from the town of Huddur, capital of the Bakool region, Al-Shabaab fighters quickly took over the town. This development gave a clear indication that the Islamist group was closely monitoring events in the liberated areas and was capable of taking swift advantage of any signs of weakness on the part of AMISOM and its allies. Clearly, more also needs to be done in dealing with the Al-Shabaab menace since its presence can still not be hastily discounted. If Ethiopia should pull out, there would be a quick reversal of gains made in the areas under Ethiopian control with dire implications for the progress made in the country so far. Going forward, however, priority should be given to building robust Somali National Security services capable of sustaining progress and propping up the emerging institutions of the state.

The second thorny issue with escalation potential is the Jubaland process. Months after its liberation, there are still indications that the withdrawal of Al-Shabaab from the port-city has left a leadership vacuum. Consequently, there is tension over the control of Kismayo and its surrounding areas. Different interests by various stakeholders surrounding the formation of a Jubaland state, made up of the Gedo, Middle Juba and Lower Juba regions have become a bone of contention capable of derailing progress made in the fight against Somalia's Islamist fighters and the advancement towards peace in the country.

Following an open declaration by the Prime Minister, Abdi Farah Shirdon,

that a convention of delegates to craft the state was unconstitutional, the process still went ahead and led to the election of Sheikh Ahmed Madobe as president of the region on 25 May 2013. Sheikh Madobe's pro-government Ras Kambuni militia is credited with liberating Kismayo with the support of Kenyan troops. His election has, however, generated controversy as the government has yet to recognise the process that led to his election, and therefore his presidency of the region. Another warlord and former Somali defence minister, Barre Hirale, has since the election of Madobe also pronounced himself president, thereby leaving the region with two acclaimed presidents.

Given the nature of clan relations in the region, tension between Mugadishu and the local process, and inherent regional and local stakes around the Jubaland process, the situation raises the risk of clashes between rival militias in and around the southern port city of Kismayo. With Al-Shabaab's presence and previous hold on the region, any deterioration of security as a result of this situation will be exploited by the group and will play directly into its propaganda machinery with dire consequences for the gains made in the country.

The status of Somaliland in relation to Somalia remains a thorny issue in the maintenance of the territorial integrity of Somalia. This is because, on the one hand, granting independence to Somaliland has implications for the character of emerging regional administrations. On the other hand, not resolving the issue has implications for the relations between the two entities, the nature of Somali representation, the on-going lobby for recognition by Somaliland and the overall access to resources by external development partners in diverse ways. In the past, the issue had been shelved principally because there was a transitional government in Mogadishu and the entire process towards the consolidation of

political leadership was still evolving. With the end of the transition, talks between the two entities are being facilitated by the Government of Turkey and have so far been progressing well, though without clarity as to the possible outcome.

Given the stakes involved for both parties, the talks might not progress in the cordial manner of its preliminary meetings. This is precisely because if it comes to the substantive issues touching on the independence of Somaliland, the stakes for the two parties will rise and dictate the dynamics of their cooperation and commitment to the talks. This will in turn have direct implications for the relationship between Hargeysa and Mogadishu. Even though this is not expected to easily turn violent between the two entities at any point in time, any strain in their relationship could have enormous implications for peaceful cooperation between the two. In the unlikely event that this relationship turns violent, there are indications that many regional actors may take sides and will provide the basis for souring relationships between Somalia and those countries that are pro-Somaliland, but not necessarily anti-Somalia.

President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud of Somalia and President Ahmed Silanyo of Somaliland are likely to find themselves in the midst of tensions emerging from positions they take during the talks. Already there are indications that unionists in the northern parts of the country feel President Hassan's government did not consult them enough before the meetings and are also worried about the possibility of Mogadishu making concessions that may not further their unionist stance. Similarly in Somaliland, the interests of separatists will emerge as a thorny issue that President Silanyo will have to deal with. Any move against the wishes and interests of such groups is likely to raise tensions within and for the government in

Somaliland. A section of Somalilanders has already criticised the initial meetings by arguing that they hold out the possibility of future reunification.

Going forward, however, the imperatives for the resolution of the question of the status of Somaliland become more important by the day. The increasing international goodwill towards Mogadishu and the likelihood that this will be translated into international commitments by the new government can become another tipping point. For instance, bordering on matters of post-conflict reconstruction commitments and World Bank loans, the question remains as to whether Somalia's external debts to be accrued will be accomplished with or without the consent of Somaliland; and whether the debt issue will have any implications for Somaliland's contribution to the use and payment of those debts.

Key issues and internal dynamics

The formation of federal states in line with the provisional constitution continues to animate political activity in Mogadishu. Of the many on-going attempts, however, the formation of Jubaland out of the Gedo, Middle Juba and Lower Juba has emerged as a major bone of contention between local proponents of Jubaland and the central government. Despite objections and a lack of recognition from the central government, the local processes have gone ahead. The Somali Federal Government (SFG) has a number of reservations about the local processes for the formation of Jubaland. Key amongst them is the procedural issue originating from disagreements over who is driving or facilitating the process. According to a press release from the Somalia Federal Government (SFG), the Mogadishu leadership prefers to facilitate the formation of SFG-mandated local administrations as foundation stones

for the eventual formation of federal states, as is the case with consultative engagements in the Baydhabo and Beled Weyne regions. Given that the on-going process towards the creation of Jubaland is neither driven from Mogadishu nor has the involvement of the SFG, the latter regards the process as unilateral and therefore unconstitutional.

The government is particularly concerned about the representativeness of the process and fears the possibility of Ogaden sub-clan dominance and the marginalisation of others. Many clans inhabit the Gedo, Middle Juba and Lower Juba areas of Somalia. These include the Darood, Hawiye, Dir and other ethnic minorities such as the Bantus. The region is therefore a melting pot of important identity compositions. Historically, even within the Darood, the three main sub-clans, namely the Ogaden, Marehan, and Harti, are not known to have a history of peaceful co-habitation and have had difficulty in sharing Kismayo. They have fought over the territory several times. The SFG fears that without adequately addressing issues of representivity as part of the on-going process in Kismayo, clan-based grievances and tensions could emerge to undermine reconciliation in the country. Emerging tensions following the election of Ahmed Madobe as president seem to validate the SFG's concerns about the representativeness or inclusivity of the process and the need to make sure that any local administration that emerges in the region is sustainable and can ultimately become a building block for federalism in Somalia, and not another source of instability.

Going ahead without the support and participation of Mogadishu means that the Federal Government's Roadmap for the Formation of Juba Region's Federal Unit might have to be revisited. In line with the SFG's bottom-up approach to the formation of federal units in the country, the SFG outlined

a three-phase process for the formation of a state from that region. This involved the conversion of the Kismayo process into a Kismayo Reconciliation Conference aimed at promoting reconciliation in the region between April and June 2013. This would then be followed by the appointment of interim district and regional administrations and the election of local representatives by the SFG through a consultative process by December 2013. The final phase would have seen a regional dialogue process committed to the formation of federal units between January and May 2014. Given the inability to tap into the momentum of the local process, it remains to be seen how Mogadishu and the emerging leadership in Kismayo will deal with their differences so as to prevent the exploitation of their divisions by Al-Shabaab.

In response to the rising tension, IGAD's Extraordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government tasked an ambassadorial team, led by Ambassador Mahboub Maalim, to conduct a confidence-building mission to collect the views of various stakeholders about the situation. After visiting both Mogadishu and Kismayo from 16 – 19 May 2013 to speak to the principal parties and various stakeholders, the team concluded (i) that despite a collective agreement for the process to be based on the constitution, there are differences in the interpretation of what the constitution actually says about the process; (ii) that the inclusivity of the process is disputable, despite assurances by local Jubaland actors that it is inclusive; (iii) that the process lacks the leadership of Mogadishu even though all parties appreciate the need for such leadership; (iv) that the support of IGAD is welcome; and (v) that the Jubaland process has helped in dealing with the Al-Shabaab menace in the region, but that divisive internal tensions threaten to erode gains made and could lead to the empowerment of the Islamist group.

Among other proposals, the team also recommended a process of dialogue and reconciliation under the facilitation of IGAD and that the Federal Government and parliament speed up processes towards the enactment of laws that will facilitate the formation of regional administrations, as well as other stabilising mechanisms. Whereas such recommendations are necessary, their swift implementation holds the key to addressing the simmering tensions in the region.

As part of the efforts towards the building of strong institutions, the SFG has embarked on a programme to reform the Justice sector. These efforts have culminated in two major meetings aimed at defining the way forward for the process. In a working group meeting on 21 February 2013, the government's coordination of the justice sector and the need for a participatory and inclusive dialogue process between that sector and civil society was the major issue discussed. Subsequently about 200 participants attended a five-day national dialogue conference which reviewed the justice system and made recommendations for legislative and institutional reforms.

Among other important recommendations, the meeting called for the establishment of a National Law Reform Commission to review and update all existing laws to make them consistent with the Provisional Constitution. The meeting also recommended conducting an inventory of the physical infrastructures of the court buildings so as to identify those needing refurbishment and also reiterated the principle of separation of powers and the independence of the various branches of government. The recommendations of the meeting provided the basis for a two-year action plan towards strengthening the legal and institutional framework of institutions in the justice sector to enable them to perform their requisite roles for

strengthening the state by delivering justice.

The international approach regarding support for Somalia's constitutional and administrative development appears to be mainly security-oriented, hence efforts towards rebuilding the security and judicial sector have been prioritised. As noted in the Technical Assessment Mission (TAM) of the UN (19 April 2013), the new UN Assistance Mission, that will be deployed by the 3rd June 2013, will assist the Federal Government in coordinating international support towards transforming and building the security sector and the justice institutions and aligning support with the Government's National Security and Stabilisation Plan.

Concerning the Somali National Police Force (SNPF), the Federal Government has set out the Strategic Action Plan for Policing (2013-2017) that will be financially supported by international partners with capacity-building programmes, technical advice and equipment. The TAM mentions that, as part of the Federal stabilisation strategy, the new UN Assistance Mission will assist the Federal Government in revising legislation regulating the police and in establishing the police service outside Mogadishu. As the TAM points out, Somalia's security gains need to be sustained by the Federal Government and the AMISOM forces. The role of an effective SNPF in complementing the AMISOM police component is crucial to enable the AMISOM military component to continue to defeat Al-Shabaab in those areas controlled by the latter.

Geo-political dynamics

Africa and RECs

Under the auspices of the IGAD Office of the Facilitator for Somalia Peace and Reconciliation, the Joint Committee on the Grand Stabilisation of South Central Somalia Plan was launched on 6 December 2012. The plan aims at supporting the Somali Government

in extending its federal authority throughout the liberated areas in South Central Somalia, by assisting the government to establish local administration, institute rule of law as well as provide security and public services to the population, among other tasks. A Memorandum of Understanding between the IGAD Joint committee and the Federal Government was agreed in late December 2012 with a view to strengthening the implementation of the Plan and establishing the institutional base through which the cooperation and support to the government should be undertaken.

On 19 May 2013 a delegation from IGAD regional governments met Somali traditional elders from Juba regions with the purpose of undertaking a fact finding mission that might contribute to clarifying the recent events and the position of both leaders that claim Jubaland's presidency. IGAD's intentions in remaining involved as a facilitator of the mediation process in Jubaland can be understood in the context of the implementation of the Plan.

The Somali political situation was extensively discussed at the 47th Extra-ordinary IGAD Council of Ministers Meeting held in Addis Ababa on 2 May 2013 and also at the 21st Extraordinary Summit of IGAD Heads of States. In both meetings, the efforts of the Federal Government of Somalia were duly acknowledged in areas such as reconciliation. Members also stressed the need and readiness of IGAD to remain at the forefront of the search for peace in Somalia and the need for support from the international community.

United Nations

Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 2093 (6 March 2013), a technical assessment mission (TAM) was deployed to Somalia in March 2013 for the implementation of a new UN mission. The TAM has subsequently proposed the new United Assistance Mission in

Somalia (UNSOM) with the aim of politically and technically advising the Federal Government in its efforts towards the achievement of a sustainable peace and a functioning federal state. The mission is mandated, among other duties, to bring its good offices and mediation capacities to bear “in respect of political and reconciliation processes at the federal and regional level”; (b) politically and strategically advise the Federal Government in peacebuilding and statebuilding strategies; (c) assist the Federal Government in building a legal architecture for the preservation of human rights, child protection and prevention of conflict-related sexual violence, and (d) support the Federal Government to better coordinate international funding support.

The implementation of the new mission implies an end to the mandate of the UN Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS) which has since 1995 been an important actor in the political processes and quest for peace in Somalia. The decision to structurally incorporate the humanitarian component into the new Mission has raised questions since the UN Country Team has expressed concerns that such integration could lead to local perceptions that humanitarian aid has political objectives. The new UN Mission entails a shift in the mandate of the humanitarian component from focusing on humanitarian aid to development work.

By institutionally enhancing the mandate and supporting mechanisms of the UN's presence through the new UN Mission, the UN is clearly demonstrating its eagerness to expand the role of the organisation in Somalia. The reinvigorated role defines the UN as the main international supporting institution in the country. The fact that the new UN Mission will also be run from Mogadishu might help improve its contribution to the efforts of the new government.

International community

Welcoming the momentum that Somalia was experiencing in both the security and the political spheres and recognising the necessity to better coordinate international initiatives towards the country, an International Donors' Conference on Somalia took place at Lancaster House in London on 7 May 2013. The conference aimed at enhancing international coordination and aligning international support strategies with the efforts of the government.

The conference outlined a number of practical mechanisms to support the government's Six Pillar Policy. Measures put forward by the Communiqué of the meeting touched on security, public financial management or good governance, and justice. One of the commitments of the meeting was to support the efforts of the Somali government towards eradicating piracy and maritime crimes through the establishment of “internationally recognised Somali waters, which will help it protect its abundant maritime resources and revitalise economic activities, as well as end toxic dumping and illegal fishing.”

The need to encourage the Government to set up measures to address sexual violence and to investigate and prosecute the killing of journalists was also underscored as a measure to enhance the respect and preservation of human rights in Somalia. The meeting proposed the establishment of funding mechanisms such as the Special Financing Facility and the Rule of Law Fund as measures to facilitate the management of international support.

Civil society

The involvement of the Somali civil society as a key decision-making partner in reforming the security sector and the judicial institutions, as well as in crafting reconciliation programmes is vital to ensuring the sustainability and inclusivity of the

processes. Despite the fact that the Government has repeatedly stated the necessity to promote and even prioritise bottom-up dynamics in carrying out state building programmes, the perception that key decisions on the country is largely driven by non-Somalis, particularly the International community, persists. Therefore, the need both from the Federal Government and from the international community to engage the Somali civil society in policy making is important in dealing with the perceptions about the lack of ownership of ordinary people. The 2013 London Conference could have represented a platform for civil society to express its views about the direction of the country. However, civil society did not participate in the event, given the fact that it was largely at the national level.

Despite these concerns, the role of youth in the quest for national reconciliation and the economic recovery of the country is gradually becoming a major focus of discussion within Somali civil society. On 15 May 2013 a roundtable on peace building was held in Mogadishu in which the mainly youthful participants made a number of recommendations. Considering the fragile peace that Somalia is maintaining, the need to promote youth employment was stressed as a way to preventing insecurity and youth criminality. The fact that the development of the country is in part relying on the capacity of youth to empower themselves as pro-active players in the social and economic spheres, identifies them as key actors to consider in the attainment of governmental goals. The conference emphasised the need by international partners to allocate funding for the creation of youth employment opportunities and capacity building programs with a view to improving their skills and encouraging businessmen to employ them or promote

entrepreneurship among young people.

Civil society organisations have also been involved in several initiatives in regard to institution-building, including the working group meeting on 21 February 2013 which saw the need to highlight the need for the inclusion of civil society in seeking reform of the justice sector.

Scenarios

The trajectory of the many issues the Somali Federal Government is currently grappling with may change in various ways in response to the underlying dynamics. Given the dynamics around the Somaliland talks and the tensions surrounding the Jubaland process, the following scenarios are possible:

Scenario 1

Discussing substantive matters about sovereignty in the on-going Somaliland talks could end up straining the relationship between the two partners. Such a situation could also worsen the cordial relationship between many countries in the region, particularly the relationships between countries that adhere to pro-Somaliland foreign policies.

If the contention surrounding Sheikh Madobe's presidency of Jubaland is not resolved quickly, the nature of resultant tensions could turn violent. This is particularly worrying because the various warlords involved are capable of mobilising support to back up their views through the use of force. Such a situation could undermine public confidence in the new government and the emerging local administration as well as provide the context for a robust propaganda operation by Al-Shabaab in the Jubaland region.

Scenario 2

The Somaliland talks could end up in a stalemate. This could be a situation where both parties agree to disagree over the existing ambiguity over the status of

Somaliland and leave the current situation as is. Such a situation would have implications for future relations between Mogadishu and Hargeysa and the question of resource management between the two capitals.

The Jubaland tensions could also continue. The leadership in Mogadishu might maintain its position, as has been the case until now, thereby maintaining the status quo of the current strained relationship.

Scenario 3

The Somaliland talks could make significant progress and reach an agreement satisfactory to both parties. The tensions over Jubaland could also end with realistic concessions made by both the Somali government and Sheikh Madobe's administration.

Options

The PSC could consider the following policy responses:

Option 1

The PSC could support the negotiations between Somaliland and Somalia, by providing dialogue platforms and technical support, where necessary. This could also include lobbying Turkey to advance its approach in resolving the issue from a single state affair to an international issue supported by multilateral institutions, particularly the AU. Both the AU and the UN could also endeavour to expressly recognise and support the mediation efforts by Turkey.

Option 2

The PSC could consider issuing a statement about the tensions in Jubaland, urging the relevant parties to make the necessary concessions so as to resolve the tensions surrounding the Jubaland process in the interest of peace and sustaining progress on the ground. The findings of IGAD's Confidence-building team report could provide a concise analysis of the genesis of

the crisis and the way forward. It is also important for the PSC to remain involved in, and supportive of the outcomes of the IGAD's engagement. The PSC could also consider specifically assigning the AU Special representative to Somalia to directly support the IGAD process and to collaborate towards facilitating the recommended dialogue between Mogadishu and Kismayo.

Option 3

Given the fact that Al-Shabaab still controls parts of the country, it might be important for the PSC to discuss ways of supporting Mogadishu's quest for reconciliation and security sector reform in the country. It will be, particularly, necessary to review the existing modalities for dealing with the Al-Shabaab menace within the context of reconciliation and a commitment to engage with willing partners or actors.

Option 4

The support of African countries towards the construction of a sustainable security sector cannot be overemphasised. Sustainability of gains made in Somalia depends on the establishment of a strong Somali sector. The PSC could consider calling on members of the AU to support all initiatives of the government in this direction.

Documentation

PSC communiqué PSC/PR/COMM.1 (CCCLXXV)

Country analysis

MALI

Introduction

The last country analysis on Mali appeared in the February 2013 issue of the *Peace and Security Council Report*. The current analysis therefore only covers the events that occurred since then; readers interested in prior developments are invited to access the February issue.

Precedent AU and PSC communiqués

The PSC of the AU held its 376th Session on 16 May 2013 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Having noted the progress realised by Malian authorities with regard to the Roadmap to Transition, the PSC reiterated its 'request for the unconditional disarmament of all non-state entities in Mali, more specifically the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA), and the unequivocal agreement by the latter to adhere to respect for the unity and territorial integrity of Mali, as a prerequisite for its participation in the political process in the country'. The PSC further took note of Resolution 2100 (2013) of the UN Security Council authorising the transformation into a UN operation of the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA), reiterating the criteria defined in the communiqués of its 358th and 371st sessions held on 7 March and 25 April 2013, respectively. The PSC emphasised the need for close cooperation between the AU and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in order to ensure a harmonious presence in Mali.

During its 371st session of 25 April 2013 in Addis Ababa the PSC noted with concern that Africa was not adequately consulted in the drafting and consultation processes that led to the adoption of the UN Security

Council resolution authorising the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) to take over from AFMISA. The Council also noted that 'this resolution did not take into account the concerns formally expressed by the AU and ECOWAS, nor did it integrate the proposals by these entities in a constructive spirit that would facilitate international support in harmony with existing efforts from Malian actors'.

The Support and Monitoring Group met in Bamako on 19 April 2013. Its discussions essentially focused on reconciliation, the Kidal issue and elections. The meeting agreed to create a group of international partners, coordinated by Pierre Buyoya, in order to find a solution to the Kidal issue. With this mandate the latter has travelled twice to Ouagadougou to meet with the President of Burkina Faso, Blaise Compaoré, who is the ECOWAS mediator, and the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) leadership.

On 18 April the heads of the intelligence and security agencies of the Sahelo-Saharan region held a meeting about security cooperation. The AU Commission organised a ministerial meeting on 17 March 2013 in Nouakchott, Mauritania on the strengthening of security cooperation and the implementation of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) in the Sahelo-Saharan region.

During its 358th session held in Addis Ababa on 7 March 2013 the PSC expressed its support for the transformation of AFMISA into a UN operation. It put forward five guiding criteria for this transformation, i.e. the formulation of a solid mandate, close consultation of the AU and ECOWAS by the UN throughout the process, the mobilisation of financial and logistical support for AFMISA, support for the political role of the AU and ECOWAS, and support for regional security cooperation.

Potential escalation of the crisis

The potential escalation of the crisis is underpinned by the persistent terrorist threats, the exacerbation of violence between non-state armed groups and the risks of violence linked to the contesting of elections that are organised in inadequate conditions.

With regard to terrorist threats, the operations conducted by the French and Chadian armies in the Adrar des Ifoghas in northern Mali have reduced al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb's (AQIM) fighting capabilities, and those of the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) and Ansar Dine. In reprisal, the Agadez and Arlit localities in Niger were hit by two suicide attacks on 23 May 2013 that killed more than 20 people. The attacks, which were initially claimed by MUJAO, according to some jihadist sources, were allegedly 'supervised' by the Algerian national Mokhtar Belmokhtar.

More than ten suicide attacks were recorded in northern Mali between February and May 2013, three of which (in Gossi, Ménaka and Gao) all took place in May. In March 2013 Malian authorities announced the dismantling of a terrorist ring in Bamako. Terrorist threats and suicide attacks have clearly increased in northern Mali. The rest of the region and the south of Mali are equally exposed to these threats. Thus it is important to articulate a regional response to the terrorist situation that prevails in the north of the country.

Since the launch of France's Operation Serval, several armed groups have emerged in addition to the MNLA. Firstly, as a rational self-defensive response to the threat posed by Touareg groups, it is important to point out the transformation in January 2013 of the National Front for the Liberation of Azawad, created in April 2012, into the Arab Movement of Azawad (MAA) under the leadership of Ahmed Ould Sidi Mohamed. Since

January 2013 there have been several clashes between MAA and MNLA soldiers. In the locality of In-Khalil armed combats were recorded first between Arab Kountas and Arab Tiliemsi in February 2013, then between Touareg and Arabs at Anéfis in April and May 2013. Although the area has supposedly been secured by AFMISA, recurrent fighting between Touareg and Arab groups continues to be reported at Ber. The latest MAA attacks in this area were recorded in May 2013. Indeed, northern Mali continues to be affected by instability and insecurity in the context of inter-community tensions.

As for the presidential elections, of which the first and the second rounds have been set for 28 July and 11 August 2013, respectively, the political, security and technical conditions do not seem to be conducive to the organisation of polls that could contribute to a long-lasting end to the crisis. The internal political context is tense and will become even more tense closer to the elections. In addition, a large majority of Malians are of the opinion that no elections should be organised until the country has fully returned to the control of the Malian army. Nonetheless, less than two months before the elections the Malian government is still not present in the Kidal region, a territory claimed by the MNLA. Furthermore, issues such as the voters' roll, the return of administrative personnel to the liberated areas and the restoration of the state's authority throughout the national territory have still not been resolved.

Unless there is a noticeable improvement in these conditions, the organisation of a poll on the set dates presents serious risks of confrontation of a potentially violent character, given the political polarisation in the south of the country, the depth of intra- and inter-community divisions, and the persistent insecurity. In addition to

and despite the need to establish an elected government and effective government institutions in Mali, the holding of elections under the current circumstances may bring to power candidates who are seen as legitimate by external partners and yet perceived as illegitimate by the Malian population.

Key issues and internal dynamics

The national context remains dominated by issues related to the upcoming elections, the political influence of the 22 March coup authors, and the question of dialogue and national reconciliation.

With regard to the elections, the transitional government confirmed on 27 May its intention to hold presidential elections on 28 July 2013. This decision seems to result more from the increasing pressure from the international community than from an in-depth analysis of the situation in Mali. While displaying great generosity in terms of their contributions, during the Brussels conference of 15 May donors emphasised the urgency of holding these elections. On 15 April French officials had indeed already indicated that their country would remain 'inflexible' on the question of elections, thereby aligning France with the United States, whose internal legislation forbids any form of support to a country that has been subject to a coup until constitutional order has been restored.

With regard to the influence of the 22 March coup authors on the transition process, it is interesting to note that a number of them and their allies hold strategic positions within government and administration, although these allies have displayed a certain level of independence in carrying out their duties. In addition, although sociopolitical coalitions that are in favour of the 22 March putsch, such as the Patriots Convention for Mali (COPAM) and the Alliance of Patriot

Democrats for the End of the Crisis, seem to be playing a marginal role, their voices and influence could become more prominent in the event of a post-electoral crisis.

As far as dialogue and reconciliation are concerned, the Malian government adopted a draft decree on 6 March 2013 introducing the creation of a Dialogue and Reconciliation Commission for a two-year period. Officially inaugurated on 25 April 2013, the commission was created without first establishing the basis, actors, and purposes of the dialogue and reconciliation process. It is indeed already subject to dispute. Furthermore there is a strong growth of community groupings such as the Platform of Tamasheq Executives and Intellectuals, the Songhoi groupings, the Black Tamasheq (Bella) or Peulhs groupings, which add up to the already existing Collective of Northerners (COREN). The multiplicity of the commission's potential interlocutors is such that it might end up complicating the debate further and allowing it to be hijacked by community and partisan interests.

On 17 May 2013 Tiébilé Dramé, a former minister of Alpha Omar Konaré's government, was appointed Special Advisor to the President of the Republic in charge of negotiations with the armed groups. Such an appointment seems to reflect a willingness to initiate negotiations with armed groups and to reacquire ownership of the negotiation process, which has until now been left to a large extent to external actors. Public opinion, however, seems hostile to the idea of dialogue, especially with the MNLA, because of its bad reputation among the general population. There is pressure for the prior disarmament of armed groups and the trial of MNLA fighters accused of crimes.

With regard to the armed groups, in addition to the MNLA and MAA

there is the Islamic Movement of Azawad (MIA), which was founded in January 2013 by Alghabass Ag Intallah, an MNLA and Ansar Dine dissident, as well as the militias of the Songhoï self-defence group, the 'Ganda-Izo' born of 'Ganda-Koy'. In addition to these groups, the High Council of Azawad (HCA) was created in May 2013. Under the leadership of Mohamed Ag Intallah, a former MNLA member and older brother of Alghabass Ag Intallah, this group was joined by the Amenokal of Kidal under Attaher Ag Intallah on 18 May 2013. In an announcement made on 19 May 2013 Alghabass announced the future dissolution of the MIA and his affiliation to the HCA, which became the High Council for the Unity of Azawad (HCUA) for the occasion. After the Amenokal of Kidal had joined the HCUA, the MNLA announced on 22 May 2012 that it was part of the HCUA and would fully adhere to its principles and objectives aimed at establishing a general congress for the people of Azawad.

Geopolitical dynamics

Africa and RECs

The subcommittee of the Heads of State of ECOWAS met in Abidjan on 11 and 12 May 2013 to examine the practical aspects of the transformation of AFMISA into a UN operation. The Heads of State requested that MINUSMA be placed 'under the command of a West African national', arguing that 'the sub-region's armed forces have honourably fulfilled their mission in several regional crises and will achieve the same level of success with the MINUSMA'. These requests could potentially create discontent among other troop-contributing countries such as Chad, which has paid a high price for the restoration of peace and territorial integrity in Mali.

During the 42nd ECOWAS Summit held on 27 and 28 February 2013 in Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire and its preparatory meeting on 24 February the Heads of State and Government

firmly condemned the suicide attacks and guerrilla tactics utilised by terrorist groups. They thanked the French government and other relevant countries for supporting the Malian army and instructed the ECOWAS and AU Commissions to address 'a request to the UN [with a view to] transforming the AFMISA into a United Nations mission'.

United Nations

On 17 May 2013 the UN Secretary-General appointed the Dutch national and former Special Representative of the UN in Côte d'Ivoire, Albert Gerard Koenders, as head of MINUSMA. This mission, created on 25 April 2013 by Security Council Resolution 2100, will absorb the UN Offices in Mali (created under Resolution 2085) and AFMISA. Authorised for an initial period of 12 months, MINUSMA's deployment, which is expected to take place on 1 July 2013, was affected by the end of the 'main battles led by international military forces in the immediate surroundings or within the projected area of responsibility of the MINUSMA' and 'the significant reduction of terrorist capabilities'.

The main tasks of the mission will consist of stabilising the situation in the main regions and encouraging the main role players to contribute to the restoration of state authority throughout the country; assisting with the implementation of the Roadmap to Transition, including the national dialogue and the electoral process; promoting and protecting human rights; and acting to impose national and international justice. Resolution 2100 also authorises the presence of the French army alongside MINUSMA 'in support of the mission's personnel, in the event of serious or imminent danger, upon request by the Secretary General' – in other words, for the fight against terrorism, which is not covered by the UN mandate.

On 26 March 2013 UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon submitted a report to the Security Council on

the situation in Mali that presented two options for the transformation of AFMISA into a UN operation. The first option recommended an integrated and multidimensional UN political presence alongside a military force under African command. The second option, which was the one agreed to in the end, recommended a multidimensional integrated UN stabilisation mission in support of a parallel force.

In January 2013 the UN Secretary-General hailed the French intervention in Mali, which was code named Operation Serval. On 6 March President Hollande of France announced the progressive withdrawal of 4,000 French troops from Mali starting in April 2013. On 9 April 2013 the Advisor to the US Secretary of Defence for Special Operations and Low-intensity Conflicts, Michael Sheelan, called AFMISA a 'completely incapable force' that 'failed to live up to expectations'. This criticism was rejected by the AU's Special Representative and head of AFMISA, Pierre Buyoya.

The situation in Mali does not correspond to the usual UN deployment context. Among the factors that have influenced the transition to MINUSMA, there is on the one hand France's desire to reduce its troop numbers on the ground and to integrate its engagement into a multilateral framework while consolidating the security gains achieved. On the other hand, there is a need for predictable and sustainable resources to finance the mission, given the opposition of certain members of the Security Council, i.e. the United States, which does not want to repeat the experiences of the UN support module in assisting the AU Mission in Somalia, which was funded through assessed contributions.

International community

During the 3241st session of its Foreign Affairs Council held in

Brussels on 27 May 2013 the EU declared that 'it is of the utmost importance to establish adequate conditions for the restoration of state administration throughout Mali and for the holding of elections, including in the Kidal area and in refugee camps'. By implicitly recognising the absence of adequate conditions for the organisation of credible elections, this communiqué seems to open the door for a possible postponement of the elections. The Foreign Council, however, still decided to send an observer mission to Mali.

On 15 May 2013 the EU held a high-level Donors Conference on Mali in Brussels. Over three billion euros were committed to the reconstruction of the country. However, these funds come with certain conditions linked to the traceability of development aid, among others. Subsidies including 50 million euros aimed at supporting the salaries of AFMISA forces were already committed during an EU-ECOWAS convention on 9 April 2013.

In February 2013 the EU also deployed a training mission for the Malian army (known as EUTM Mali) to provide training in international humanitarian law, civilian protection and human rights, including the training of Malian army battalions and their tactical and logistical support units.

Civil society

Certain groups such as COPAM and COREN are opposed to what they perceive as the participation of transitional authorities in the organisation of elections. COPAM considers the date of 28 July unrealistic and argues that the interim president does not really intend to hold elections on that date in. According to this group setting the electoral calendar while adequate conditions remain absent is a way to maintain the state of emergency until 6 June. The organisation therefore accuses the

government of pretending to be willing to organise elections in order to please the international community, while in fact seeking to stay in power beyond July.

Since the March 2012 coup important discussions about the electoral process and the institutional crisis have been held by some of the country's religious leaders. In addition to the Chairperson of the Islamic High Council, Mahmoud Dicko, the most influential of them were Cheick Hamala Haïdara, the Sherif of Niono, and Ousmane Madani Haïdara, Chairperson of Ançardine Al Islmia (a movement based in Bamako, not to be confused with Ansar Dine of Iyad Ag Ghaly). They have not hesitated to express themselves on the actions of transitional bodies and to give their advice on the upcoming elections.

Furthermore, there is the question of the partisan and sometimes collaborative character of a large number of civil society organisations, which often maintain close ties with political parties. In this context, so-called civil society is not exempt from possible manipulation and could even be involved in violent protests linked to electoral management or negotiations with armed groups in the north, as has been the case in the past. Considerably more voices are making themselves heard against what is perceived as complicity between France and the MNLA.

Scenarios

Scenario 1

The transformation of AFMISA into MINUSMA occurs at the set dates and within a relatively stable security context. The jihadist groups' capacity to cause harm and to expand to other areas is considerably limited thanks to French and Chadian forces and to the improvement of security cooperation among countries of the region. At the political level the

efforts of the envoy in charge of negotiations with armed groups bear fruit, with the support of the international community. The armed groups turn in their weapons and the MNLA agrees to recognise the territorial integrity of Mali. With the consent of the international community elections are postponed to the last quarter of 2013, which allows for the preparation of a more credible and inclusive poll.

Scenario 2

The transformation of AFMISA into MINUSMA occurs in a relatively stable security context. However, Kidal, where the UN mission chooses not to deploy, remains under MNLA control. Negotiations are initiated between the Malian government and movements such as the MNLA and HCA, but they struggle to bear fruit. Due to pressure from external partners, elections are organised in July. The internally displaced persons and refugees issues are not fully resolved and Kidal does not take part in the election. The credibility and inclusive nature of the poll are compromised, which in turn undermines the legitimacy of the elected president and his/her government. Unable to assert its authority, the new government struggles to initiate dialogue and negotiate with armed groups. It fails to implement the political and economic reforms required, and the reconciliation process initiated by the Dialogue and Reconciliation Commission begins to fall apart. Tensions in the south plunge the country into a political crisis and intercommunity violence increases.

Scenario 3

The security situation deteriorates with the increase of terrorist attacks in the north and south, and across the subregion. In the context of general insecurity, the deployment of MINUSMA is delayed and AFMISA struggles to execute its mandate due to logistical and financial constraints, and becomes the target of jihadist groups. In addition,

negotiations with armed groups in the north get bogged down. The situation is such that elections cannot be held in 2013. Protests against the transitional government increase. A deep political crisis and the deterioration of the security situation plunge the country into uncertainty.

Options

Option 1

As one is reminded by the attacks that recently hit Niger, it is important to give sustained attention to the regional dimension of the security crisis in Mali, especially as far as the fight against terrorism is concerned. The AU and ECOWAS should continue to insist on the need for a regional approach and to encourage practical initiatives in this regard, as discussed during the Nouakchott meeting held on 17 March (the strengthening of security cooperation, the implementation of the APSA in the Sahelo-Saharan region, as well as other initiatives). Such an approach would allow MINUSMA, still confined to Mali, to overcome the challenges to its mandate caused by geographic constraints.

Option 2

The management of the Malian crisis by African bodies has revealed serious shortcomings in the APSA. The first problem has to do with the relationship between the continental (AU) and the regional (ECOWAS) levels. This lack of harmonisation and coordination of efforts has been a serious impediment to the efficiency of the actions undertaken and has weakened the continent's ability to make itself heard at the UN level. Lessons should be learned from this experience as a matter of urgency, i.e. through the swift organisation of the meeting announced by a PSC communiqué on 25 April. The second shortcoming is linked to the two organisations' failure to intervene during the offensive by northern armed groups against the

Malian army last January. Given the relatively distant implementation of the African Stand-by Force and its quick deployment capability, the adoption of a decision by the AU Summit in May 2013 to create an African Immediate Crisis-response Capability constitutes a major development that needs to be materialised very urgently.

Option 3

The resolution of the Kidal issue and the organisation of credible and transparent elections are key to the consolidation of the successes achieved in Mali so far and to the establishment of a basis for a long-lasting solution to the multidimensional crisis faced by the country. Therefore the AU and ECOWAS must continue to assert their positions on the Kidal question, i.e. the unconditional disarmament of the MNLA and the restoration of the Malian state's authority, as the essential component of a political process aimed at responding to the legitimate claims of the different actors concerned. With regard to the elections, the two organisations should encourage the international community to focus not only on the short-term organisation of the poll, but also on the conditions necessary to ensure the legitimacy and regularity required for them to be accepted by all and to contribute to the consolidation of peace. In this regard, the Panel of the Wise should conduct an evaluation mission on the ground. Its conclusions would allow for an objective decision to be made on the question of the electoral calendar.

Documents

AU documents

PSC/PR/BR.(CCCLXXVI) (16 May 2013), PSC Communiqué, 376th PSC meeting

PSC/PR/COMM.(CCCLXXI) (25 April 2013), PSC Communiqué, 371st PSC meeting

PSC/PR/COMM.(CCCLVIII) (7 March 2013), PSC Communiqué, 358th PSC meeting

Conclusions (20 April), Fourth Meeting of the Support and Monitoring Group on the Situation in Mali

Nouakchott Conclusions (17 March 2013), Ministerial Meeting on the Strengthening of Security Cooperation and the Implementation of the African Peace and Security Architecture in the Sahelo-Saharan Region

ECOWAS documents

Press release no. 124/2013 of 12 May 2013

Press release no. 043/2013 of 24 February 2013

Press release no. 053/2013 of 28 February 2013

UN documents

Resolution 2100 (2013), adopted by the 6952nd session of the Security Council, 25 April 2013

Resolution 2085 (2012), adopted by the 6898th session of the Security Council, 20 December 2012

Report of the Secretary-General on the Situation in Mali, S/2013/189 of 26 March 2013

Other documents

Council's conclusions on the situation in Mali, 3241st session of the Foreign Affairs Council, Brussels, 27 May 2013

Post-Summit analysis

AU SUMMIT MAY 2013

The 21st Summit of the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 21 to 27 May 2013. The Summit coincided with the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), which was transformed into the AU in 2002. The golden jubilee of the OAU/AU was celebrated on 25 May 2013, which rekindled the spirit of African unity and solidarity, development and security.

The AU celebrated the 50th anniversary under the theme of Pan Africanism and the African Renaissance to celebrate Africa's past, present and future narratives and 'provide a unique opportunity to show the success stories and prospects of Africa'.

The Summit took place in a celebratory spirit. At the opening ceremony the current Chair of the AU and Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Hailemariam Desalegn, said that the AU was aspiring to and working for 'a continent free from poverty and conflict and an Africa whose citizens (could) enjoy a middle income status'. The Chairperson of the AU Commission, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, emphasised and noted that conflicts still remain a huge problem for economic growth and could be silenced only by Africa's 'solidarity and unity'.

A number of peace and security and other institutional issues with implications for the stability of the continent were debated and discussed by the Assembly that convened on 26 and 27 May 2013,

as well as the Executive Council and Permanent Representatives Council meetings. One of the major outcomes of the Summit was the adoption of the strategic plan of the AU Commission for the years 2014–2017 and enthusiastic calls for its implementation.

With fewer than one thousand days before the deadline for the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, the Assembly discussed the process leading to the Post-2015 Development Agenda. National, regional and continental consultations are under way to provide inputs and contributions towards the elaboration of this agenda. The Assembly called on member states and regional economic communities to build alliances for the African Common Position to enable Africa to speak with one voice during future discussions at the UN General Assembly aimed at defining the Post-2015 Development Agenda. The Assembly also created a High Level Committee of Heads of State and Government under the leadership of Liberia's President, Mrs Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, to oversee and harmonise the process, finalise agreement on the Africa's common position, and identify continental priorities leading to the 'New Global Agenda.' The concept of Vision 2063 also featured on the agenda of the Assembly, resulting in a recommendation by the Executive Council calling on the Commission to present the relevant framework document for consideration by AU Policy organs in January 2014 with the final Agenda 2063 to be adopted in June 2014. This recommendation by the Council was subsequently accepted and endorsed by the Assembly.

One of the breakthroughs of the AU Summit was the support and

expression of agreement in principle for approval of the report submitted by the High Level Panel on alternative sources of financing for the AU by the Assembly. The leaders agreed that the AU should be provided with adequate and predictable resources to enable it to fund its various programmes and reduce dependency on external funding resources. The Assembly also requested the Commission to submit this report to the Conference of Ministers of Finance and Economic Planning for its urgent consideration in order to draw up concrete proposals with regard to financing. In addition, the Conference of Ministers would also have the opportunity to make proposals regarding the implementation modalities of the various available options, including exploring increased assessed contributions and additional proposals by member states, as well as report to the Assembly at its next Ordinary Session in January 2014.

The Assembly appointed four new members to the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights for a two-year term. The Assembly also discussed UN Security Council reform and noted that Africa's interests should be maintained and safeguarded in the ongoing intergovernmental negotiations about Security Council reform and urged that Africa speak with one voice at the UN.

The AU Assembly was presented with a report of the PSC on its activities and the state of peace and security in Africa from January to May 2013. The report also included issues relating to the signature and ratification of the PSC Protocol, membership of the PSC and the rotation of its chairmanship, as well as the

activities undertaken by this organ in the pursuit of its mandate. The report noted the increasing involvement in and response of the AU to conflict situations in Africa and noted that the AU was demonstrating greater consistency with regard to the principle of non-indifference, which underpins the APSA.

The report also noted that despite some existing challenges, the situation in Somalia has continued to improve. The implementation of the Six-Pillar Plan by the Somali government in Mogadishu was described as a continuing success on the political front, while the Somali National Security Forces, with the support of AMISOM, are consolidating the security gains made at the expense of al-Shabaab. With regard to Sudan and South Sudan, the report noted that the 27 September 2012 Cooperation Agreement signed in Addis Ababa was facing disagreement challenges about specific elements concerning security arrangements. The Assembly called for a speedy implementation of the agreement.

The reporting period covered by the PSC's report saw enhanced involvement of the AU in the crisis in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), including the issue of the M23 rebels. On 24 February 2013 the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC and the Region was signed by 11 members of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), as well as by the UN Secretary-General, the Chairperson of the AU Commission, and the current chairs of the ICGLR and SADC. The new framework document has created a new set of engagement commitments by the DRC government, the countries of

the region and the international community for effectively addressing the crisis. The appointment of the former Irish President, Mrs Mary Robinson, as the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region was also seen as a positive move forward. The inaugural meeting of the Oversight Mechanism for the implementation of the framework agreement took place in Addis Ababa on 26 May 2013 under the joint auspices of the AU and the UN.

The Assembly commended and recommended the close coordination and cooperation among the AU, the UN, the ICGLR and SADC to provide collaborative support for the efforts of the countries of the region. Malawi, South Africa and Tanzania will contribute troops to the Intervention Brigade. Tanzania will send 1,200 troops, the largest contribution by countries of the region. The armed rebellion by the Seleka rebels in the Central African Republic that led to the overthrow of the government of François Bozizé on March 2013 also featured in the report.

Reference to the crisis in Mali was also included in the report. The AU High Representative and head of AFISMA, former President Pierre Buyoya, in close cooperation with the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for West Africa, Said Djinnit, and the UN Office in Mali, the ECOWAS Commission and the EU are working together to resolve the crisis. The Assembly welcomed the positive developments in Mali and 'encouraged the Malian actors to spare no effort to successfully complete the transition and organize, under the required conditions of transparency and fairness, presidential and legislative

elections which will ensure the full restoration of constitutional order'. The Assembly emphasised the importance of a strong African presence in Mali and expressed the determination of the AU and its member states to play a substantive political role in the conduct of the peace and stabilisation process in Mali, as well as in the completion of the restoration of the constitutional order in that country. The Assembly commended the success of the donors' conference organised in Brussels on 15 May 2013.

The Assembly also considered the contentious issue of Western Sahara, noting that although the issue continued to be a matter of deep concern to the AU, no progress had been recorded in addressing this situation during the past year. The Assembly commended efforts by the Chairperson of the Commission to interact with relevant parties, including the UN and other international stakeholders, with the objective of renewing international engagement in order to resolve the conflict in terms of relevant AU and UN resolutions providing for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara.

The threat of extremism and terrorism was also on the AU agenda. The Assembly condemned attacks in Kenya, Libya, Mali, Nigeria, Somalia and Tanzania that claimed the lives of many victims and caused damage to infrastructure and property. The Summit called for the ratification and implementation of relevant AU and international instruments, including the 2004 Protocol to the 1999 OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism.

Acknowledging the challenges to fully operationalise the African

Standby Force (ASF) and its Rapid Deployment Capability (RDC), the Assembly decided in principle to immediately establish an African Capacity for Immediate Responses to Crises as a transitional arrangement and pending the full operationalisation of the ASF and its RDC. The AU has stated that such a force would 'provide the AU with a flexible and robust force, made up of military/police capabilities, force enablers and multipliers, equipment and resources to be voluntarily provided by Member States on the basis of their willingness and capabilities. The relevant force would also be deployed very rapidly to effectively respond to emergency situations, within the framework of the African Peace and Security Architecture.'

Another major decision by the Summit, taken by the Executive Council of the AU, was to support Kenya's request to have the International Criminal Court (ICC) withdraw the indictments against President Uhuru Kenyatta and his deputy, William Ruto, for crimes against humanity, allegedly committed in the aftermath of the December 2007 elections, and to refer these cases back to the jurisdiction of the East African Court. Both the accused pledged to cooperate with the ICC in order to clear their names. However, the prevailing view at the AU is that the ICC proceedings may complicate 'the long path to national reconciliation and healing' in Kenya. Both indictees deny allegations of orchestrating violence.

Among the visiting dignitaries who attended the AU Summit and accompanying festivities were UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, French President Francois Hollande and US Secretary of State John

Kerry. The event was also attended by Brazil's President Dilma Rousseff.

The Summit proposed a budget of a little more than \$300 million for the year 2014. With increasing calls and pressure to take ownership of the AU agenda by funding it from African sources, the AU also announced that due to a reduction in funding by external non-African partners, Africa's financial contribution would amount to about 55% of the total funding of the AU.

The Assembly also discussed developments concerning the operationalisation of the APSA. The Assembly reiterated a commitment to accelerate the full operationalisation programme of the APSA, including the necessary refinement of provisions for facilitating implementation.

Important dates to diarise

4	June	International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression
5	June	World Environment Day
12	June	World Day against Child Labour
17	June	World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought
20	June	World Refugee Day
26	June	International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking

Country	Election	Date *
Guinea	National Assembly	30 June 2013
Tunisia	Presidential, Parliamentary and Local	23 June 2013
Togo	National Assembly and Local	July 2013
Mali	Presidential, National Assembly and Local	7 July 2013
Mauritius	Presidential (indirect)	September 2013

**could change, dependent on circumstances*

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