

UNOAU HIGHLIGHTS

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United Nations Office to the African Union



Third AU-UN Annual Conference held in New York

The United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres and the African Union Commission Chairperson Moussa Faki Mahamat held the Third African Union-United Nations Annual Conference at the UN Headquarters in New York on 6 May 2019. The two Principals, who were joined by senior officials from both organizations, welcomed the strong collaboration between the United Nations and the African Union and the progress made on the implementation of the two joint framework agreements and expressed their commitment to continue to deepen the strategic partnership.

The Annual Conference further deliberated on key issues of mutual interest such as the AU's theme of the year 2019 'Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons: Towards Durable Solutions to Forced Displacement in Africa'; climate change; and gender parity and women's leadership. The Annual Conference also deliberated on situations in Libya, Sudan, the Horn of Africa, the Central African Republic, South Sudan, Mali and the Sahel and the Democratic Republic of Congo, in each case emphasizing the imperative for strengthening collaboration and coordination towards effectively addressing peace and security challenges. They agreed that they would establish joint working groups on the wider Sahel and the Horn of Africa respectively, in order to develop joint strategies to address these challenges. In their closing remarks, the Secretary-General and Chairperson stressed the importance of linking peace and security, development and climate change interventions on the continent.

Group of Friends of the UN-AU Partnership launched in Addis Ababa

On 20 May, the Group of Friends of the UN-AU Partnership was launched at the African Union in Addis Ababa, under the co-chairpersonship of the Embassy of Rwanda and the Permanent Mission of Norway to the African Union. The event focused on the theme 'Getting to know the UN-AU Framework and the Partnership' and attracted great interest among Member States and other stakeholders. It was addressed by the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, Smaïl Chergui, and the SRSO to the African Union and Head of UNOAU, Hanna Tetteh, among others. The meeting underlined the growing importance of the UN-AU partnership, while noting the significant progress made within the past two years, and further outlined several priorities for future engagement.

The Group of Friends of the UN-AU Partnership is an initiative that aims to strengthen collaboration between the UN and the AU, and to generate increased understanding and support of the Joint Partnership from Member States. The Group serves as an informal and open forum for engagement and will deliberate on any priority issues for the UN-AU partnership. The group of friends indicated that they would have two informal meetings before the end of the year.

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UNOAU joins AU and partners in a meeting on peacekeeping training

From 3 to 4 May, UNOAU participated in a joint meeting between the African Union Commission, the African Peace Support Trainers Association (APSTA), and donors, held in Addis Ababa. The meeting focused on funding for APSTA and review of proposed AU workplan for the implementation of training in support of AU-mandated and authorized Peace Support Operations. The acting Head of the AU PSOD reiterated the importance of APSTA's role in harmonizing training, with consideration for increased and complex conflicts in Africa, and the need to provide effective training for peacekeepers.

AU holds workshop on Compliance Architecture

UNOAU and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) participated in two day (9-10 May) workshop on African Union Compliance Architecture. This came as part of on-going broader efforts to support to the AU Commission towards developing a compliance architecture, including human rights and international humanitarian law (IHL) compliance practices and conduct and discipline, for AU Peace Support Operations. The objective of the exercise was to determine capacity needs to efficiently build an AU architecture that complies with international standards, including UN standards.

The efforts are in line with the AU Chairperson's Report on the relevant provisions of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2320 (2016) on United Nations Assessed Contributions for AU-led Peace Operations authorized by the Security Council, presented during the AUPSC's 689th meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 30 May 2017 (PSC/PR/ (CDLXXXIX)). The report underlined that human rights and conduct and discipline compliance structures, both at strategic and mission levels, suffer from acute lack of adequate capacity and resources. Once completed, this compliance framework is to be applied to all AU missions and field offices.

Democratic Republic of Congo: Technical Assessment Mission

The African Union deployed a technical assessment mission to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to assess the security situation in Ebola-affected provinces of North Kivu and Ituri from 2 to 9 May. The mission, facilitated by UNOAU and supported by MONUSCO (The United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo), was planned following recent upsurges in Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreaks and attacks on AU health workers and health facilities in the affected region. The team engaged with various stakeholders from political, security and humanitarian sectors. It was noted that the EVD National Management Authority has limited capacity, especially in engaging local communities and civil society, which makes for easy spread false information. There were also concerns raised over the need to secure a government commitment to effective stakeholder coordination in order to contain the rapid spread of EVD in the affected region.

UNOAU collaborates with AU to develop police pre-deployment training materials

The African Union Commission Peace Support Operations Division (PSOD) hosted a workshop to develop a generic Police Pre-Deployment Training (PPDT) package for Individual Police Officers (IPOs) from 29th April to 3rd May. The generic PPDT targeted police officers who would deploy as IPOs to AU Peace Support Operations or pledged as part of the African Standby Force (ASF) capabilities. The training aimed at developing capacity for Training of Trainers programme for Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms and Member States.

UNOAU's contribution to the workshop focused on harmonizing training content with UN standards and integration of the UN Police Strategic Guidance Framework (SGF). Training materials were developed in collaboration with other AU partners, such as the British Peace Support Team-Africa, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Institute for Security Studies. At the request of PSOD, UNOAU has continued to play a leading

role in the development of the training package and implementation thereof.

UNOAU supports NATO Course on Movement and Logistics Operational Planning

UNOAU supported a North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Movement and Logistics Operational Planning course that was held in Douala, Cameroon, and brought together twenty participants drawn from the African Union as well as African Member States. UNOAU Chief of Mission Support and Planning Section, Douglas Langrehr's session focused on UN's logistics support system, including strategic support at the Department of Operational Support (DOS) at the UN Global Service Centre in Brindisi; the supply chain model and processes, and the movements control system. In addition, he provided advise during practical exercises.

The course provided opportunities for UNOAU to interact with participants from regional planning elements and strengthen the triangular partnership between the UN, AU and Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms. UNOAU intends to continue supporting similar training opportunities in the future.

AMISOM operational assessment

UNOAU supported the African Union Peace Support Operations Division (PSOD) in the operational assessment mission to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

The main objective of the assessment which took place from 13-18 May, was to follow up on the UN-AU Joint Review undertaken in March 2019 and the implementation of the Somalia Transition Plan (STP). The mission engaged with AMISOM Force Headquarters (FHQ), the Somali National Army (SNA), the UN Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS), the UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) as well as the AMISOM rear office in Nairobi.

The Mission assessed operational progress, including ongoing independent and joint operations at sector levels and a plan to protect major population centers among other processes.

High-level workshop on climate-related security risks and mediation

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the African Union and Head of UNOAU, Ms. Hanna Tetteh, participated in a high-level workshop on climate-related security risks and mediation in Nairobi, Kenya.

SRSG Tetteh made opening remarks at the event, stressing the urgent need to implement comprehensive climate change adaptation and mitigation measures in Africa. She reflected on the impact of climate change and its link to conflict, including in the Sahel region, and elaborated on ways to address climate-related security risks. The SRSG highlighted the importance of cooperation and multilateral action in this regard, citing the UN-AU partnership as a good example, and stressing that the principals of both organizations had recently agreed to further strengthen cooperation on issues of climate change, mitigation and adaptation strategies in the context of the ongoing partnerships on peace, security and development.



SRSG Tetteh meets ECOWAS Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives

SRSG Tetteh met with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives, during the group's monthly meeting held on 17 May in Addis Ababa. The SRSG briefed on the work of UNOAU as well as recent developments and initiatives going forward, highlighting the need to actively engage Regional Economic Communities (RECs). Recognizing the important role of the RECs, she sought views on how to strengthen the triangular cooperation between the UN, the AU and RECs, and with Member States, in addressing peace and security issues on the continent. She urged ECOWAS Member States to further clarify the division of labor between the AU and RECs for better coordination and collaboration.

The Dean of the ECOWAS Permanent Representatives, the Ambassador of Mali, commended the SRSG's initiative to brief the group and pledged a firm commitment of the Permanent Representatives to support the advancement of the mandate of UNOAU. Other representatives made similar statements and suggested closer cooperation to address a variety of peace and security challenges on the continent, including in Libya and in the Sahel region.

The Permanent representatives raised the issue of the importance of being able to utilize UN-assessed contributions to support AU peace operations, and the need to support the operationalization of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and the African Governance Architecture (AGA) were also discussed.

AUPSC discusses threat of health epidemics in Africa

On 16 May, the African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) held a meeting on 'Mitigating the threat of Health epidemics to Peace and Security in Africa (Ebola)'. The meeting included briefings by the Chair of the AUPSC for May and the Ambassador of Rwanda, the AU Commissioner for Social Affairs, and the Director of the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC), who commended the various stakeholders for their efforts in addressing the current scourge of the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). They expressed concern about a variety of developments, including prevailing insecurity in the affected areas, called for immediate action and the need for Member States to be more proactive in dealing with challenges of this nature, and they further stressed the need for collaborative approaches and acceleration of the AU response.

In her statement, SRSG Tetteh expressed concern over the Ebola crisis in the DRC and noted that the current challenges faced by health workers, including the unacceptable attacks they regularly endure, undermine the international community's efforts to contain the outbreak. The SRSG noted that the climate of mistrust was fueled by socio-political dynamics which affected various efforts to fight the disease. She also called for better security for the health workers deployed in the affected areas. The SRSG highlighted the ongoing UN support to the global Ebola response in the DRC through the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the DR Congo (MONUSCO) and commended other actors for their continued efforts.

Members of the AUPSC were unanimous in their response on the threat posed by the EVD to economic development and the associated insecurity in the affected regions. They called for better community engagement and collaboration among the countries of the region in order to avoid further spread of the disease and underscored the threat posed to African integration if the crisis was not urgently addressed. Also highlighted was the need to mobilize resources and put measures in place for surveillance to predict future occurrences and curtail the spread, including through the adoption of multi-sectoral approaches in addressing the crisis. The members noted that it was important to learn lessons from the 2015 Ebola crisis in West Africa.

Strengthening UN-AU-RECs triangular collaboration

A joint team of technical experts from the AU and UNOAU visited the East African Community (EAC) headquarters in Arusha, Tanzania from 7 to 9 May 2019. This mission was undertaken within the context of strengthening the UN-AU-Regional Economic Communities (RECs) triangular cooperation and collaboration, pursuant to the Joint UN-AU Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security.

The EAC welcomed the mission, noting that while there is interaction between the EAC and the UN, new dynamics call for strengthening the UN-AU-REC engagement based on a programmatic approach, particularly on peace and security. In its engagements with the EAC Secretariat, the mission identified a number of concrete areas for collaboration, such as in mediation, elections, women, peace and security as well as small arms and stockpile management, including through trainings offered via the UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs or the UN staff training college.

AUPSC holds a meeting on the impact of cyber-security on peace and security in Africa

The African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) held a meeting on 'Mitigating the threat of Cyber-Security to Peace and Security in Africa'. The meeting, which was Chaired by the Ambassador of Rwanda, Hope Gasatura Tumukunde, Chairperson of the AUPSC for the month of May, noted the important role of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and digitalization for the development of the continent. Related challenges were also pointed out, underscoring the need for appropriate laws, regulations and protection measures.

The meeting further noted gaps with regard to awareness, understanding, knowledge and capabilities in the field of cyber-security, stressed the sensitivity of the issue, emphasized the need for national strategies as well as the creation of organs dedicated to cyber-security, and stressed the importance of international and multi-sector collaboration.

Member States shared their experiences with regards to cyber-security threats and explored ways to mitigate them while maximizing the dividends of the digital revolution. The importance of the African Union Convention on Cyber-Security and Personal Data Protection was also emphasized.

SRSO and Head of UNOAU, Hanna Tetteh, delivered a statement noting that new technologies offer immense opportunities for economic development and general well-being in Africa, while also playing an increasingly central role in modern-day conflict and creating vulnerabilities that pose new risks to international peace and security. She stressed the need for assistance to AU Member States to build capacity to effectively counter cyber threats.

She further echoed the UN Secretary-General's warning on the absence of consensus on whether the Geneva Conventions apply to cyber-war. Finally, the SRSO stressed the need for collective efforts to address cyber-security and pledged the UN's support to the AU in this regard. AUPSC discusses challenges faced by AU Peace Support Operations

AUPSC discusses challenges faced by AU Peace Support Operations

On 23 May, the AUPSC held a meeting on the 'Report on the challenges faced by AU-led Peace Support Operations (PSOs) and how to address them'. Presenting the report, the Head of the AU Peace Support Operations Division (PSOD), Mr. Sivuyile Bam, stated that the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) serves as a blueprint for promoting peace, security and stability while safeguarding the prime interests of African citizens, in coordination with the African Governance Architecture (AGA). He noted that AU-led PSOs are directed to create stability while reducing the threat of armed groups, preventing an escalation of crisis, ensuring the protection of civilians, facilitating humanitarian assistance, training national security forces as well as protecting host government installations and personnel. The challenges outlined by the report included questions related to mandates, pre-deployment preparation and training; equipment and financial constraints.

UNOAU Deputy Head and Director of Political Affairs, Mr Gerald Mitchell, delivered a statement commending the AU for progress made in operationalizing the APSA, including the African Standby Force (ASF), and recognizing the APSA as an important framework in the maintenance of peace and security, illustrated for example by the deployment of several PSOs by decision of the AUPSC. He recognized challenges relating to the ever-evolving conflict environment, characterized by complicated political, security and geographic contexts, and necessitating in many cases a peace enforcement posture. The UN's reinforcement of its support to the AU initiative of Silencing the Guns by 2020 was also conveyed, as demonstrated by the establishment of a UN Task Force in April 2019.

UNOAU supports AU-led discussion with Ethiopia on clearance of landmines and explosive remnants of war

On 29 April, UNOAU and the African Union, held discussions with the Ethiopian Ministry of Defense to support the Ethiopian-Eritrea border clearance project on landmines and explosive remnants of war. The meeting is preparatory for further engagement with the Ethiopian authorities in defining the modalities and nature of the required support. Separately, in coordination with the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), UNOAU will deliver a Mines, Explosive Remnants of War Awareness and Counter-Improvised Explosive Device (C-IED) training during a joint U.S. Army Africa (USARAF) and Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) Justified Accord field training exercise scheduled for July 2019.

Partnerships for peace



Hester Paneras, Head of Partnerships at UNOAU leads a moment of silence for fallen peacekeepers at an event marking this year's International Peacekeepers Day, jointly organized by the Embassy of Indonesia and other MIKTA countries in collaboration with UNOAU. The event was held on 31 May



SRSR Tetteh and Director R. Sharamo of the Institute for Security Studies exchange a signed Memorandum of Understanding on partnership to support the African Union



AU Political Affairs Commissioner, Amb. M.S. Cessouma (third from right) and SRSR Tetteh with a technical AU and UNOAU joint team after a meeting that explored collaboration towards publishing a commemorative book on UNSCR 1325. This book will feature stories of African women engaged in peace and security efforts



UNOAU colleagues attended a two-day consultation on 'harnessing women's leadership on arms control to prevent violence and advance development' that was held at the African Union Headquarters in Addis Ababa from May 29-30



SRSR Tetteh paid a courtesy visit to the newly appointed Chief of Staff in the Office of the Chairperson of the African Union, Amb. Abdoulaye Diop on 24 May



While on a visit to Addis Ababa ahead of engagements with the African Union, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General to the Great Lakes Region, Mr. Huang Xia paid a courtesy visit to SRSR Tetteh on 24 May



SRSR Tetteh with Amb. Sebade Toga of Togo to Ethiopia, and Permanent Representative to the African Union and the UN Economic Commission for Africa after a courtesy visit at Togo Embassy

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