

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION DIRECTORATE

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Marking the 20th Anniversary of the African Union Peace and Security Council: Reaffirming Our Collective Commitment to Building a Secure, Peaceful and Prosperous Africa

In this month of May, we commemorate the Twentieth Anniversary of the official launch of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) that took place on 25 May 2004.

Throughout the month, we will reflect on the significant strides made by the Council for the past 20 years in promoting peace, security and stability across Africa.

The commemoration will run throughout the whole year of 2024, but the month of May, being the month in which the PSC was officially launched will have the grand activities with the active participation of all AU Member States, AU Organs, Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (RECs/RMs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), think tanks, academic institutions, as well as bilateral and multilateral partners.

The celebration presents a unique opportunity for the Council to assess its accomplishments and the challenges faced over the past two decades in discharging its mandate of promoting peace, security and stability in Africa.

Our goal remains steadfast: to silence the guns, realizing a conflict-free Africa, aligning with the principles outlined in the Solemn Declaration adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government on 26 May 2013, on the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

The activities for May 2024, will include an Open Session on May 15th to review the implementation of the Protocol establishing the AU PSC, and a High-Level Colloquium as the main commemorative event coinciding with African Day, on May 25th. The theme of the Colloquium will be “20 Years of the AU PSC as a Standing Decision-Making Organ Peace and Security: The Next Two Decades”. On the same day, an e-photo gallery exhibition and the unveiling of the PSC Visual Identity, will take place.

Each week of May 2024, the PSC will focus on specific thematic issues which have been featuring in the activities relevant to the effectiveness of the PSC in the past two decades. Such issues include Mediation and Dialogue; Humanitarian Peace and Security; Women & Youth, Peace and Security; Child Protection; and Peace Support Operations.

While reflecting on the achievements recorded, challenges faced and lessons learned in the past twenty years, the PSC looks forward to exploring innovative ideas on how to enhance its efficiency and effectiveness in discharging its mandate in the next two decades.

For media inquiries, please contact:

Ms. Lulit Kebede, Communication Officer | Political Affairs, Peace and Security Department | African Union Commission | Email: chem-langheep@africa-union.org

Information and Communication Directorate, African Union Commission | E-mail: DIC@africa-union.org | Web: www.au.int | Addis Ababa, Ethiopia | Follow Us: [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | YouTube

Notes to Editor

Key Achievements

Over the past two decades, the AU PSC has made significant progress in deploying Peace Support Operations (PSOs) to stabilize fragile contexts, protect civilians and prevent further escalation of situations. Peace Support Operations such as the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS), African-led International Support Mission to the Central African Republic (MISCA), and the Mission de l'Union africaine pour le Mali et le Sahel (MISAHEL) are among the landmark examples.

Enhanced collaboration with other stakeholders in conflict prevention, management and resolution on the continent has been strengthened, exemplified by greater coordination and consultation between the Council and RECs/RMs, is a testimony of the Council's commitment to collective security and regional stability. The establishment of the AU Inter-Regional Knowledge Exchange on Early Warning and Conflict Prevention (I-RECKE) is also noteworthy.

Moreover, enhanced collaboration and institutionalization of interactions between the PSC and AU Organs, such as the Pan-African Parliament (PAP); the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC), and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR); and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), as well as AU Specialized Agencies as NEPAD/AU Development Agency (AUDA) and the Committee of Intelligence and Security Services of Africa (CISSA), all constitute some of the glowing hallmarks of the Council's milestones over the past two decades.

Furthermore, the institutionalized strategic partnership between the AU and the UN in general, through the Joint AU-UN Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security of April 2017 and the growing partnership between the PSC and the UN Security Council, as well as between the PSC and the EU Political and Security Committee, as well as with other international organizations such as International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) on humanitarian issues, are also noteworthy achievements. The AUPSC partnership outreach also covers the initiative of AU-RECs/RMs Organ-to-Organ on peace and security, kickstarted with ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council (MSC) in April 2024.

Through inclusive and smart partnerships, the Council aims to promote durable peace and security in Africa effectively.

To address the challenges faced in the course of the past 20 years, collaboration has been intensified, and the Peace Fund has been operationalized and new partnership are being explored and forged. The emphasis has remained one of promoting and pursuing 'African Solutions to African Problems,'

True to its mandate, the PSC has also emphasized preventive diplomacy, with the active utilization of all available mechanisms that include the Panel of the Wise, FEMWISE and YouthWise. Support has also been enhanced for countries in political transition and post-conflict phases, under the auspices of the Cairo-based AU PCRDC Centre.

Additionally, the AU PSC recognizes the efficacy of inclusive approaches to peace and security and in this context, it has emphasized the mainstreaming of women and youth participation, as well as child protection in all peace processes and decision-making for sustainable peace in Africa.