Security Council

Letter dated 24 February 2023 from the Permanent Representative of Mozambique to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that, in its capacity as President of the Security Council for the month of March 2023, Mozambique will convene a Security Council open debate on the theme "Peace and security in Africa: the impact of development policies in the implementation of the Silencing the Guns initiative", to be held on 30 March 2023, at 10 a.m.

In order to guide the discussions on the topic, Mozambique has prepared the attached revised concept note (see annex). I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Pedro Comissário **Afonso**
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative

Annex to the letter dated 24 February 2023 from the Permanent Representative of Mozambique to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Concept note for the Security Council open debate on the theme "Peace and security in Africa: the impact of development policies in the implementation of the Silencing the Guns initiative", 30 March 2023

I. Introduction

During its presidency of the Security Council in March 2023, Mozambique will hold an open debate on the topic of "Peace and security in Africa: the impact of development policies in the implementation of the Silencing the Guns initiative".

The aim of the meeting is to facilitate a deeper understanding of the contribution of socioeconomic factors in promoting social cohesion, peace and stability or, conversely, in triggering conflict, including the resurgence of unconstitutional changes of government in Africa and beyond.

The high-level debate is also a unique opportunity for Security Council members and other United Nations Member States to exchange views on continent-specific solutions and innovative ways of preventing conflict, promoting conflict resolution and ensuring long-term peace and security through inclusive, transparent and effective development policies.

Building on their own experiences or the broader context, members of the Security Council and United Nations Member States at large are expected to share their analysis on how armed conflicts can be prevented or peacefully resolved in order to promote sustainable development in line with the African Union and United Nations agenda of peace, security and development.

II. Background

Owing to its tortuous route towards peace and democratization, Mozambique particularly values this topic as an opportunity to share good practices in peace and armed conflict resolution.

In this context, Mozambique sponsored a high-level event on "Silencing the guns in Africa" on 17 February 2023 in Addis Ababa, on the margins of the thirty-sixth Summit of Heads of State and Government of the African Union.

Mozambique seeks to break from the cyclical "conflict trap" which has constrained the country's prospects for development and prosperity over the past decades.

Following a 10-year armed struggle for national independence (1964–1974), Mozambique went through a 16-year devastating armed onslaught from colonial and apartheid regimes in South Rhodesia and apartheid South Africa. The conflict ended in 1992 when the FRELIMO government signed a general peace agreement with the then rebel movement and current main opposition party RENAMO. The agreement was successfully implemented under the auspices of the United Nations Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ). Nonetheless, in recent years Mozambique has experienced additional episodes of violence.

The 2019 Maputo agreement for peace and reconciliation in Mozambique and subsequent disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process supported by the United Nations and the African Union, but implemented by Mozambique's Government and institutions, is a success story. The twofold approach that combines decentralization and devolution with a unique model of demilitarization and reintegration is quite instructive for efforts to silence guns on the continent and elsewhere.

In 2013, at the celebration of its fiftieth anniversary, the African Union launched the initiative Silencing the Guns in Africa. At the time, all African Union member States expressed their "determination to achieve the goal of a conflict-free Africa, to make peace a reality for all our people and to rid the continent of wars, civil conflicts, human rights violations, humanitarian disasters and violent conflicts, and to prevent genocide".

The Security Council, in its resolution 2457 (2019), welcomed the Silencing the Guns by 2030 initiative and the African Union Master Road Map of Practical Steps to Silence the Guns in Africa by the Year 2020; recognized, inter alia, the need for a strong focus on combating poverty, deprivation and inequality; and called upon African Union member States to enhance good governance and redouble their efforts in economic development and the promotion of the well-being of their people, with a view to addressing the root causes of conflicts and laying a solid foundation for durable peace and stability.

The Master Road Map was adopted by the African Union Peace and Security Council on the understanding that the achievement of sustainable peace and socioeconomic development in Africa required the simultaneous implementation of complementary steps in all areas of action.

The Master Road Map underscores the need to take into consideration the political history of the continent, in particular the impact of three major tragedies: slavery, colonization and the unpaid-for extraction and exploitation of natural resources.

Indeed, those three tragedies have impacted the configuration of African States, with the consequences still visible today. For example, external competition for natural resources led to the design of artificial borders that did not consider peoples, societies or pre-existing States.

Furthermore, institutional and physical infrastructures were not developed to provide services to the population, but to serve geostrategic goals linked to the exploitation and control of resources. As a result, public investment and institutions have been concentrated in a few urban centres, leaving vast expanses of territory without State presence.

Achieving durable peace and security in Africa requires addressing these structural flaws, as they continue to hamper African countries' capacity to successfully overcome emerging challenges.

As noted in the report of the Secretary-General on the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (A/77/644-S/2022/959), non-inclusive, non-participatory and non-rights-based systems are less resilient to face the impact of exogenous socioeconomic shocks, which might trigger political crises. Consequently, building back better requires the strengthening of socioeconomic structures and political governance mechanisms, in line with the provisions of the Master Road Map.

In order to advance the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 16 in Africa, it is indispensable to address the underlying factors that have been

undermining African countries' capacity to deliver inclusive and equitable sustainable development, in particular:

- Country-specific experience in achieving peace and resolving conflicts through dialogue

- The role of home-grown practices and participatory approaches in addressing the nexus between development and security

- The role of regional and international cooperation in promoting peace and security

- The limited presence of State institutions and governance structures at the local level, which has been exploited by terrorist and non-State armed actors to expand their influence

- The limited role of African traditional leadership in reinforcing sociopolitical structures

- The need to prioritize specific policies and programmes in view of the limited resources available

III. Guiding questions

1. What is the best way to ensure complementarity between development and security policies in Africa?

2. What are the best practices for ensuring that development policies do not undermine peace and security on the African continent?

3. How can progress in the implementation of the Silencing the Guns Road Map inform policymakers and development practitioners in fostering resilience in conflict and emergency scenarios?

4. What tools, such as decentralization and devolution, can be developed to embrace diversity and empower communities?

5. What is the role that religious and traditional leadership can play to reinforce African democracies? What are good examples of local management of resources and informal resolution of conflicts facilitated by religious and traditional leadership structures?

6. What guiding principles can facilitate the prioritization of resource allocation in conflict situations? What should be the role of the international community in supporting this prioritization?

IV. Format and briefers

The meeting will be held in an open debate format and will be chaired by the President of the Republic of Mozambique, Filipe Jacinto Nyusi.

The following speakers are invited to brief the Council:

- The Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Africa

- The Director General of the International Organization for Migration, António Vitorino

- The High Representative of the African Union for the Silencing the Guns Initiative, Mohamed ibn Chambas

- The Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Mozambique

- The Executive Director of Fundação MASC (Civil Society Support Mechanism Foundation), João Pereira

Member States wishing to participate in person should inscribe their names on the list of speakers through the eSpeakers module of e-deleGATE. A letter addressed to the President of the Security Council, duly signed by the Permanent Representative or the Chargé d'affaires a.i., containing a request to participate in accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure must be uploaded to the eSpeakers module of e-deleGATE. Inscription for said meeting will open on 27 March 2023, at 9.30 a.m.

In order to guarantee the participation of as many Member States as possible, statements should not exceed three minutes.

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