



# Security Council

Distr.: General  
1 May 2023

Original: English

---

## **Implementation of Security Council resolutions [2320 \(2016\)](#) and [2378 \(2017\)](#) and considerations related to the financing of African Union peace support operations mandated by the Security Council**

### **I. Introduction**

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to the statement by the President of the Security Council of 31 August 2022 in which the Council, inter alia, requested me to provide it with a report that contained an update on progress made to date by the United Nations and the African Union to fulfil the commitments as set in Council resolutions [2320 \(2016\)](#) and [2378 \(2017\)](#) and recommendations on moving forward that reflected good practices and lessons learned, with a view to securing predictable, sustainable and flexible resources for African Union-led peace support operations ([S/PRST/2022/6](#)). In response to that request, I convened an interdepartmental team, which conducted extensive consultations with a wide range of stakeholders, including the African Union Commission, members of the Security Council, members of the African Union Peace and Security Council, members of the Group of African States in New York, the regional economic communities and regional mechanisms and think tanks, to review progress made and lessons learned since 2017.

2. Previous reports have responded to the requests of the Security Council contained in its resolutions [2320 \(2016\)](#) and [2378 \(2017\)](#). My 2017 report on options for authorization and support for African Union peace support operations was submitted in response to the request of the Council to continue working closely with the African Union to refine options for further cooperation on the relevant African Union proposals, including on financing, accountability, joint planning and the process for mandating African Union peace support operations, subject to authorization by the Council ([S/2017/454](#)). My 2018 and 2019 reports on strengthening the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union informed the Council on the development of a reporting framework that would establish clear, consistent and predictable reporting channels between the Secretariat, the Commission and the two Councils, as well as standardized reporting requirements ([S/2018/678](#) and [S/2019/759](#)). My letter of 15 October 2020 to the President of the Security Council reported on the findings of the requested assessment of United Nations-African Union cooperation and the structure and capacity of the United Nations Office to the African Union to meet the growing demands of the partnership ([S/2020/1020](#)).



3. The previous reports, along with lessons learned since 2017 and the continued strengthening by the African Union Commission of its accountability, transparency and compliance frameworks, illustrate concrete progress made since the adoption of resolution 2378 (2017). That progress should provide further assurance to the Security Council in its consideration of the financing, on a case-by-case basis, of African Union peace support operations authorized by the Council.

## II. Context

4. The changing nature of conflict in Africa has forced the United Nations and the African Union to adapt their operations to respond to new and evolving challenges. Such challenges include rising levels of violence deliberately targeting civilians, the increasing use of asymmetric tactics by violent groups, the entrenchment and increasing sophistication of armed extremism, the deliberate targeting of peacekeepers, the expanding influence of transnational organized crime, the growing use of private military and security companies and the complex interaction of inter-State tensions with non-State armed conflicts. Each conflict, however, has its own distinct features on account of the specific geopolitical and economic considerations at play. Accordingly, effective responses require tailored approaches.

5. Within the African Union, the Peace and Security Council is the standing organ for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. It is the centrepiece of the African Peace and Security Architecture and is supported by the African Union Commission, the Panel of the Wise, the Continental Early Warning System, the African Standby Force and the Peace Fund.

6. The African Standby Force provides a platform for the development of a common doctrine, policies and guidelines for African Union peace support operations, including joint training and exercises, joint planning, information-sharing and resource mobilization. Those policies and guidelines have informed the planning for missions such as the African-led International Support Mission in Mali and the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic. In addition, elements of the African Standby Force concept have also been used by regional economic communities and regional mechanisms, which have deployed their regional standby forces – originally intended as first responders under the African Standby Force concept – into conflict areas. Examples include the deployment of the Economic Community of West African States missions in the Gambia and Guinea-Bissau, the Southern African Development Community preventative mission in Lesotho and the Southern African Development Community mission in Mozambique. The regional mechanisms are formally part of the African Peace and Security Architecture. A draft memorandum of understanding between the African Union and the regional economic communities and regional mechanisms has been drafted and will be considered for adoption at the 15th meeting of the Specialized Technical Committee on Defence, Safety and Security in May 2023. The memorandum of understanding will outline the respective roles, responsibilities and modalities for improved coordination between the African Union and the regional economic communities and regional mechanisms.

7. The United Nations, the African Union and the regional economic communities and regional mechanisms each offer different capabilities to prevent, mitigate and respond to crises, which can be leveraged to enable a complementary response based on their comparative advantages. However, peace support operations deployed by the African Union and subregional configurations frequently suffer from funding shortfalls and gaps in mission management capabilities, as well as the absence of requisite operational and logistical capabilities, force enablers and multipliers in areas

such as aviation, intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition, reconnaissance, engineering and medical support. Contributions to cover such gaps are often made by a range of partners, including bilateral partners and the European Union. These shortfalls often limit the ability of African peace support operations to effectively implement their mandates. Consequently, the Security Council has in the past decided, on a case-by-case basis, whether and how the United Nations could help to address such gaps.

### III. Lessons learned and recent developments

8. The joint review undertaken by the United Nations and the African Union in 2016 examined the support provided by the United Nations and other partners to African Union peace support operations authorized by the Security Council. The review made the following six general observations, all of which hold lessons that are pertinent today: (a) that access to United Nations assessed contributions has provided a reliable, predictable and sustainable means of financing the support requirements of African Union peace support operations; (b) that the African Union has often acted as an effective first responder to crises before the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping mission; (c) that the United Nations must revise its own policies, processes and procedures to better support modern field operations, whether its own or those of the African Union; (d) that the African Union should continue to strengthen its own administrative and operational frameworks, which will guide the United Nations in tailoring its support to African Union peace support operations; (e) that the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations concluded that United Nations peacekeeping operations were not suited to engage in military counter-terrorism operations and, in that regard, the United Nations must determine the extent to which it could support multinational operations authorized by the African Union engaged in counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency activities given the constraints of the existing policies and support mechanisms highlighted in the review; and (f) that the broad range of tasks that African Union peace support operations are authorized to undertake means that no single support model and no single actor can adequately deliver the full range of necessary capabilities (see [A/71/410-S/2016/809](#)). Since the conclusion of the joint review, there have been further developments relevant to the questions of financing and support to African Union peace support operations. These include the 2017 authorization of support to the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel, the 2020 termination of the mandate of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and the 2022 transition from the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) to the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS).

#### Lessons from the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel

9. On 13 April 2017, the African Union Peace and Security Council authorized the deployment of the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel for an initial period of 12 months. By its resolution [2359 \(2017\)](#), the Security Council welcomed the deployment of the Joint Force. Pursuant to the request of the Council in the same resolution, I presented several options for United Nations support to the Joint Force (see [S/2017/869](#)), which were informed by my earlier report on options for authorization and support for African Union peace support operations ([S/2017/454](#)). By its resolution [2391 \(2017\)](#), the Council subsequently decided, *inter alia*, to provide specified operational and logistical support, through the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), only to Group of Five for the Sahel defence and security forces operating in Malian territory within the framework of the Joint Force, on a reimbursable basis through a European

Union-coordinated financing mechanism. Such support would be provided in strict compliance with the human rights due diligence policy on United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces (see [A/67/775-S/2013/110](#)) and limited to medical evacuation, casualty evacuation, access to life support consumables (fuel, water and rations) and use of United Nations engineering plant equipment, as well as uniformed MINUSMA engineering enabling units to assist in the preparation of Joint Force operational bases in Mali.

10. In its provision of support to the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel, the United Nations has had to differentiate between operations conducted in a national capacity and those conducted as part of the Joint Force, including for the purposes of implementing human rights due diligence policy.

#### **Lessons from the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur**

11. On 31 December 2020, after more than 13 years of deployment, UNAMID, the first African Union-United Nations hybrid operation, concluded its mandate. UNAMID was established pursuant to Security Council resolution [1769 \(2007\)](#), in which it was stipulated that the mission should have a predominantly African character and the troops should, as far as possible, be sourced from African countries. The hybrid nature of the mission was an innovation stemming from the rejection by the host Government of the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping mission. UNAMID was led by a joint special representative jointly selected by and accountable to both the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, and the mission was managed by the United Nations under its rules, policies and procedures, including on personnel and contingent-owned equipment reimbursement.

12. A joint lessons-learned study of UNAMID completed by the Secretariat and the African Union Commission following its closure noted the difficulties faced by the mission throughout its deployment, including issues with respect to the equipment and training of some of its contingents, which were exacerbated by gaps in the availability of enabling capabilities. However, the study found that the limitations of UNAMID were not linked to its hybrid nature but were determined mainly by the context in which the mission operated and its relations with the host Government (see [S/2021/1099](#), annex). The study noted that, over time, the United Nations and the African Union were able to overcome an initial lack of clarity on roles and responsibilities and disparate levels of experience and capacity, eventually allowing the two organizations to better leverage their respective strengths. The study concluded that the UNAMID experience served as an important building block for the broader partnership between the United Nations and the African Union on peace and security and recommended that future partnerships between the two organizations be guided by four considerations: (a) the specific context and need, as form should follow function; (b) the primacy of politics, as operations should be anchored in an agreed political strategy in support of or in preparation for an inclusive peace agreement; (c) clarity of roles, responsibilities and expectations between the two organizations; and (d) a balanced partnership that leverages complementary mandates and comparative strengths. Additional observations and considerations for the Council, including with regard to planning, were also presented in the context of my report to the Security Council on transitions in United Nations peace operations ([S/2022/522](#)).

#### **Lessons from the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia**

13. By the adoption of its resolution [2628 \(2022\)](#), the Security Council authorized the reconfiguration of AMISOM into ATMIS on the basis of a joint proposal developed by the United Nations and the African Union. In the same resolution, the Council requested the extension to ATMIS of the logistical support package

previously provided by the United Nations to AMISOM through the United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS). United Nations support to the African Union peace support operation in Somalia began in 2009 following a request in Council resolution [1863 \(2009\)](#) to provide a logistical support package including equipment and services but not including the transfer of funds. The United Nations Support Office for AMISOM (UNSOA) was established to deliver that package, which was subsequently expanded in Security Council resolution [2036 \(2012\)](#) to include explosive threat management capacity, level II medical facilities and the reimbursement of major equipment under United Nations rates and practices for contingent-owned equipment. Council resolution [2245 \(2015\)](#), which replaced UNSOA with UNSOS, further expanded the logistical support package to include reimbursement for equipment lost or damaged owing to hostile action and reimbursement of a subset of self-sustainment categories, in line with United Nations standards, rates and practices for contingent-owned equipment. With the transition from AMISOM to ATMIS, the United Nations, through UNSOS, has worked to ensure that its practices and support modalities are tailored and aligned with the requirements of the new African Union mission. Furthermore, UNSOS provides a non-lethal support package to Somali security forces in joint or coordinated operations with ATMIS through a trust fund.

14. The experience of the delivery of United Nations support to AMISOM and ATMIS since 2009 demonstrates the flexibility of the support office model as a means of delivering a range of mission support capabilities to peace support operations. To maintain a flexible and agile approach to the delivery of logistical support to forces conducting operations in a complex security environment, UNSOS continues to evolve and apply innovative practices, including a shift from a Mogadishu-centric model to a more decentralized delivery model that better empowers decisions on logistics requirements for nearby security operations, streamlines processes and pre-positions supplies in forward locations. Through the establishment of standardized approaches to joint coordination, planning and decision-making, UNSOS and ATMIS have successfully strengthened mission support planning and have effectively bridged a number of capability and capacity gaps among troop- and police-contributing countries. The African Union and the United Nations continue to exchange expertise and strengthen interoperability in mission support areas. Moreover, the fact that agreements such as memorandums of understanding and letters of assist for ATMIS are executed as tripartite agreements enables the African Union to perform its oversight, accountability and compliance responsibilities and facilitates the implementation of the human rights due diligence policy by the United Nations. The African Union has struggled to obtain predictable and sustainable bilateral funding to cover requirements not met through UNSOS. For the past 15 years, the European Union has provided the majority of the additional financial support required to sustain African Union peace support operations in Somalia, but it is now reconsidering that support, especially with regard to personnel reimbursements.

#### **IV. Progress to date**

15. By its resolution [2320 \(2016\)](#), the Security Council encouraged the African Union to finalize its human rights and conduct and discipline frameworks for peace support operations, to achieve greater accountability, transparency and compliance with international human rights law and international humanitarian law, as applicable, and with United Nations conduct and discipline standards. The Council also requested the African Union to update it on the progress, benchmarks and timelines for the implementation of the Peace Fund, consistent with applicable international obligations, as well as accountability, transparency and compliance frameworks for

African Union peace support operations. The evidence set out in the paragraphs below shows that the African Union, in close cooperation with the United Nations and other partners, has made significant progress in the critical areas of human rights and conduct and discipline compliance frameworks, the operationalization of the Peace Fund and financial accountability arrangements.

### **Human rights and conduct and discipline compliance frameworks**

16. African Union peace support operations are often mandated to perform kinetic tasks beyond those undertaken by United Nations peacekeeping, which presents a considerably higher risk that violations might be committed during the conduct of operations. The African Union Commission recognizes the operational necessity for its peace support operations to be planned and conducted in compliance with international human rights law, international humanitarian law, regional human rights instruments and applicable standards of conduct and discipline. Significant progress has been made in designing and implementing an overarching compliance strategic framework and the promulgation of policies on selection and screening of personnel, protection of civilians and the prevention of and response to sexual exploitation and abuse, all based on policies and practice in United Nations peace operations. Efforts are also under way to finalize a case management workflow and related plans for the creation of a case management tracking system database that is intended to eventually be interoperable with the analogous system used in the United Nations, with the ultimate goal of facilitating the screening of personnel by both organizations, following agreed modalities. Efforts on the compliance framework have been supported by a tripartite project among the African Union, the United Nations and the European Union. Implementation is ongoing, but there is much work still to be done.

17. The African Union approach to compliance includes policies and mechanisms for prevention, response and remedial action. Prevention measures implemented in Somalia include training initiatives, standard operating procedures on the treatment of persons detained by ATMIS, a mission-specific zero tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse, risk assessments undertaken prior to any major operations, an indirect fire policy aimed at minimizing civilian harm by limiting the circumstances in which African Union forces can use indirect fire, rules of engagement that regulate the parameters within which force may be used by the military in the conduct of its operations and various force commander's directives on the protection of civilians. Response mechanisms include after-action reviews of operations and activities as well as boards of inquiry convened to investigate allegations of violations of international human rights law, international humanitarian law and conduct and discipline standards by ATMIS personnel. Remedial action is supported by a Civilian Casualty Tracking, Analysis and Response Cell and the provision of ex gratia payments in cases of harm involving ATMIS personnel. In addition, the African Union Commission has informed the Secretariat that it has taken steps to support the Multinational Joint Task Force in adhering to international humanitarian law, international human rights law and conduct and discipline standards, including through the development of policies and standard operating procedures as well as the delivery of an annual induction training for incoming Multinational Joint Task Force leadership.

### **Financing of peace support operations**

18. The African Union has taken concrete steps in recent years to respond to its financing shortfalls, beginning with the January 2015 decision of the Assembly of the African Union on alternative sources of financing, which set the principle that African Union member States should fund the peace support operations budget at 25 per cent, effective January 2016, to be phased in incrementally over a five-year period.



A decision was also taken in 2016 during the African Union Summit to endow the Peace Fund with \$400 million in 2020; that target was subsequently extended to 2023.

19. Most recently, Heads of State and Government endorsed, during the African Union Summit held in February 2023, a consensus paper on predictable, adequate and sustainable financing for African Union peace and security activities. The consensus paper recalled the 2015 decision on financing and stated that the endeavour of the African Union to pay up to 25 per cent of the peace support operations component of the African Union annual budget was part of efforts to reduce its overdependence on partners to implement its peace and security agenda and would enhance African ownership of priority peace and security initiatives of the Union. It was also indicated in the paper that the 25 per cent would include costs related to the force preparation stage of African Union-led peace support operations.

### **Operationalization of the Peace Fund**

20. The African Union has made steady progress towards the full operationalization of the Peace Fund. As of February 2023, the Peace Fund had received \$337 million in assessed contributions from its member States. Most of the legal, operational, governance and oversight mechanisms of the Fund are in place. Measures include the establishment of the Board of Trustees<sup>1</sup> and the Executive Management Committee, the adoption in February 2022 of financial rules for the Peace Fund as part of the revised African Union financial rules and the recruitment of two external independent fund managers. The two main outstanding tasks for the full operationalization of the Peace Fund are the full establishment of the Peace Fund secretariat, which is under way, and the achievement of the endowment target of \$400 million, which is expected to be completed before the end of 2023. The Peace Fund secretariat will be responsible for receiving funds to the Peace Fund, allocating and acquitting the funds and reporting back to the Board of Trustees and the Executive Management Committee on the use of funds.

21. The African Union Summit in February 2023 authorized pilot projects through the Peace Fund. The Summit also endorsed the immediate use of the Peace Fund and its crisis reserve facility, specifically to support the deployment and operations of the East African Community regional force and to contribute to the financial gap resulting from the delayed drawdown of 2,000 troops in ATMIS pursuant to Security Council resolution [2670 \(2022\)](#). In that regard, the Assembly directed the African Union Commission to work out detailed modalities and steps for the immediate utilization of the Fund, in accordance with the financial rules of the African Union.

22. Strategic priority pilot projects to be implemented in 2024 have been identified, and the use of part of the Peace Fund to implement those projects will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees for consideration and adoption by the relevant African Union policy organs during the 2024 African Union budget process, which is already under way. The arrangements for financial accountability and transparency for peace support operations and the Peace Fund are captured in the revised financial rules of the African Union. With regard to the Peace Fund, the Peace Fund secretariat is responsible for submitting to the Board of Trustees and African Union policy organs quarterly and semi-annual Peace Fund budget performance reports containing information on appropriations, actual expenditure, commitments, challenges and recommendations. Overall performance against results and targets will be reported semi-annually to the Board of Trustees, the African Union Peace and Security Council and the African Union Executive Council. The Executive Management Committee of the Peace Fund will provide regular updates on financial management to the Board of

---

<sup>1</sup> The United Nations, represented by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the African Union, is an ex officio member of the Board of Trustees.

Trustees and the Independent Evaluation Group and on the exercise of their oversight responsibilities for the Peace Fund. The Peace Fund secretariat, in consultation with the Director of Finance for the African Union Commission, keeps the books of account and prepares the financial reports for the Peace Fund. The reports are subject to internal and external audit, as is the case of other activities of the African Union. If a special or additional audit is required, the Board of Trustees will review the terms of reference of the audit prior to its consideration and approval by the Permanent Representatives Committee of the African Union through its Subcommittee on Audit Matters.

## **V. Considerations for United Nations support**

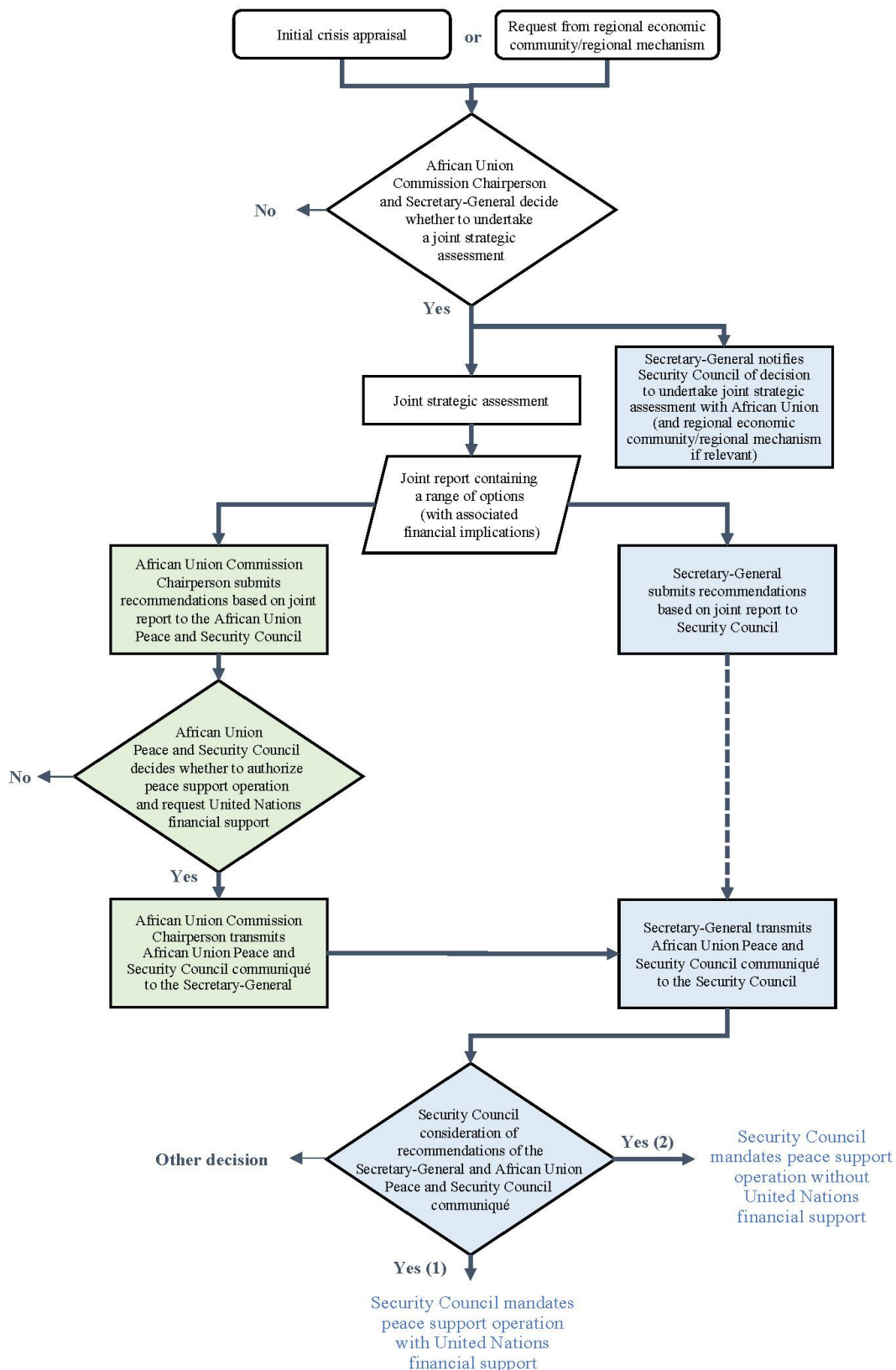
### **Joint planning and mandating**

23. The consultative planning and mandating process presented in my 2017 report was intended to reflect the prerogatives of the African Union Peace and Security Council, ensure sufficient oversight by the Security Council over any potential African Union peace support operation for which United Nations assessed funding was being sought and to facilitate the early engagement of the Secretariat in supporting planning processes and developing options for effective and coordinated support. The Council emphasized in its resolutions [2320 \(2016\)](#) and [2378 \(2017\)](#) that consultative analysis and joint planning with the United Nations was critical to developing joint recommendations on the scope and resource implications of potential peace support operations, assessing action and undertaking missions where appropriate, and regularly reporting on such actions when taken.

24. The proposed consultative process for new missions originally presented in my 2017 report and further refined in the figure below should result in cooperative outcomes that should offer reassurance to the Security Council in deciding whether to mandate a peace support operation, and whether the peace support operation should be financed or supported, at least in part, through United Nations assessed contributions. The refined process outlined specifically provides for an entry point for the regional economic communities and regional mechanisms and includes a notification to the Council when a decision has been taken to undertake a joint strategic assessment.



## Consultative United Nations-African Union planning and decision-making process



25. There have been several instances in which a subregional force later transitioned to an African Union peace support operation which, in turn, transitioned to a United Nations peacekeeping operation. Such was the case in Mali, where the Economic Community of West African States Mission in Mali transitioned to AFISMA and then to MINUSMA, and in the Central African Republic, where the Mission for the Consolidation of Peace in the Central African Republic transitioned to the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic and then MINUSCA. The lessons-learned exercise on the transitions in Mali and the Central African Republic concluded that the challenges experienced with operational planning and coordination, command and control and support arrangements highlighted the importance of early engagement in joint assessment and planning from the outset and on the need to jointly identify context-specific benchmarks for transitions (see [S/2015/3](#)). It is for that reason that the consultative process for the establishment of new peace support operations should include an entry point for the regional economic communities, regional mechanisms and subregional configurations through the African Union in advance of deployment in situations in which United Nations support or financing is desired. Under the process outlined, the Security Council would be notified whenever a joint strategic assessment between the Secretariat, the African Union Commission and, if relevant, a regional economic community or regional mechanism, was initiated. Operations for which such support or financing is not sought would not need to go through the consultative planning and mandating process but are not exempt from the requirement to comply with international standards and principles.

26. The Secretariat and the African Union Commission are currently working together on a detailed examination of existing United Nations and African Union operational planning processes as part of an initiative to develop joint guidelines for the deployment, review and transition of African Union peace support operations. This work is expected to be completed by the end of 2023.

### **Financing models**

27. Under the consultative planning and mandating framework, the Security Council would first decide, on a case-by-case basis, whether to authorize the deployment of an African-led peace support operation. It would then proceed to its case-by-case determination of whether to provide access to United Nations assessed contributions. In the cases for which assessed contributions are authorized, the level of appropriations and the manner in which those appropriations are apportioned among United Nations Member States would be decided by the General Assembly, in line with Article 17 of the Charter of the United Nations, based on a proposed budget prepared by the Secretariat, through the normal budget process, in consultation with the African Union Commission.

28. Four financing models were presented in my 2017 report as options through which United Nations assessed contributions could be used to support an African Union peace support operation, as follows: (a) ad hoc subventions in exceptional or emergency circumstances in which shortfalls in available resources from the Peace Fund and other sources of funding are experienced; (b) joint financing of a jointly developed budget of a mission, managed by the African Union; (c) the establishment of a United Nations support office financed through assessed contributions, to undertake specific tasks determined by the Security Council to support an African Union peace support operation; and (d) the joint financing of a United Nations-African Union hybrid mission managed by the United Nations, but for which the African Union bears a portion of the costs in line with its commitment to meet some of the financial requirements of its own peace support operations. All four models remain valid approaches to meeting financing requirements for African Union peace

support operations under different situations. However, ad hoc subventions are not predictable or sustainable sources of funding, and the option of using United Nations assessed contributions to finance, at least in part, the budget of an African Union-managed mission is one that remains largely aspirational given the need for guidance from the General Assembly. Approaches derived from the remaining two models provide the most practical means of ensuring adequate, predictable and sustainable funding for peace support operations in the short and medium terms, while also ensuring that political solutions remain at the centre of the mission's mandate.

29. One approach is the establishment of a joint United Nations-African Union mission that reports to both the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council but is managed by the United Nations under its regulations, rules, policies and procedures. The budgets for joint missions would cover the entirety of the financial requirements of the mission, including applicable reimbursements to troop- and police-contributing countries under the policies, standards and rates established by the General Assembly. The design of joint missions should align political engagement with operations and programme delivery to ensure that political solutions remain the focus of the missions' objectives.

30. The other approach is the delivery of a support package by the United Nations through assessed contributions. The support package approach, which can be delivered through a standalone support office, affords a coordinated, flexible and transparent framework combining multimodal support arrangements via United Nations capacities and capabilities, outsourced services from commercial providers and specialized capacities provided by Member States. Any combination of mission support tasks normally undertaken in a United Nations peace operation context can theoretically be delivered through a support package. The scope of activities to include would be determined by the Security Council and can be adjusted over time. The activities covered through a support package not only represent a significant proportion of the overall costs of a peace support operation but are also targeted to address gaps identified in the operational support capabilities available to the African Union Commission and troop- and police-contributing countries. A support package can be used to support a wide range of mandated activities, including those which would normally fall outside the scope of United Nations peace operations. In those contexts, it is essential that the peace support operation and any United Nations-provided support package be deployed as part of a coherent political strategy.

31. Under either of the above approaches, the specific mandate and associated structures should be tailored to the specific context; they should not necessarily duplicate current or previous examples in which support was provided to African Union peace support operations using United Nations assessed contributions. Indeed, the manner in which support and financing can be provided could look very different, to take into account lessons learned and the requirements of the situation and mandate. Both approaches would facilitate the application of United Nations rules and regulations, standards for financial oversight, accountability mechanisms and requirements for human rights due diligence and can be implemented under existing policies and procedures. The specific support arrangements should be designed to promote regional ownership and enhance the ability of African Union peace support operations to become self-sufficient. A fully autonomous African Union mission support capacity remains our shared objective, and it is therefore essential that both organizations continue to build on existing efforts to enhance collaboration in operational support, planning, oversight, accountability, compliance and decision-making, with a view to enhancing the autonomy and ownership of the African Union and ensuring a shared understanding of the most pressing support needs and decisions on how to prioritize them.

32. The Secretariat has, on various occasions, been requested to deliver an operational support package through a trust fund. Such arrangements may be politically expedient, but the experience of managing voluntarily funded support packages has shown that they are largely unsuited to the demands of African Union peace operations, requiring the African Union and, by extension, the United Nations, to manage several diverse funding mechanisms and engage in extensive fundraising efforts. The lack of adequate, predictable and sustainable funding for trust funds significantly limits the scale and scope of support that they have been able to deliver. Moreover, the inability of the United Nations to meet the expectations and requirements of the forces seeking support has inevitably led to tension and frustration.

### **Mission budgeting, financial management and reporting**

33. The budgets and subsequent performance reports of joint missions and support packages financed through United Nations assessed contributions would be developed in line with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and relevant General Assembly resolutions. They would be submitted to the General Assembly for review through the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Fifth Committee in the same manner as the budgets for United Nations peace operations. The United Nations would support the African Union to reinforce its monitoring and reporting policies in order to provide the required budgeting, financial and performance reports to the General Assembly.

34. It should also be borne in mind that the United Nations budget process itself is time- and resource-intensive. It begins a year in advance of the financial period in question and involves considerable performance reporting and audit requirements after the conclusion of the period, all of which include multiple levels of Headquarters and intergovernmental review. The methodologies for developing budgets, including the standard cost and ratios as well as the standards and policies for the reimbursement and control of contingent-owned equipment, were developed over time to meet the requirements of the mandated activities of United Nations peace operations and the international character of its troop- and police-contributing countries. For example, regarding the reimbursement of the costs incurred by troop- and police-contributing countries in the expeditionary deployment of their military and police units to United Nations peace operations, the reimbursement rates for military and police contingent personnel approved by the General Assembly are based on surveys of United Nations troop- and police-contributing countries from all World Bank income categories.

### **Mission support**

35. The 2015 report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (A/70/95-S/2015/446) and the 2016 joint African Union-United Nations review pointed to several shortcomings in the administrative frameworks in place for United Nations peace operations. These are being addressed in a variety of ways, including through my management reforms, which included enhanced delegation of authority to the field and streamlined processes for more effective and efficient operational support. By aligning responsibility for mandate implementation with the authority to manage resources, heads of entities can be held accountable for performance. The United Nations administrative frameworks will need to continue to be adapted to ensure that they are fit for purpose in supporting missions and mandates established by the Security Council. The lessons learned from the challenges faced by the Secretariat in supporting existing United Nations peace operations should be applied when considering the potential provision of support to African Union peace support operations whose mandates may demand regular combat engagement, including against armed extremists. Moreover, support directly provided by the United Nations

to peace support operations must be delivered in accordance with the human rights due diligence policy on United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces and within the regulatory and administrative framework established by the General Assembly, including United Nations rules and regulations as well as standards for oversight and accountability.

36. As is the case with administrative and budgetary arrangements, operational support arrangements for United Nations peace operations were originally created for United Nations peacekeeping missions and may therefore not be optimized to meet the requirements and operational tempos of African peace support operations. They are also premised on contingents deploying the majority of their own contingent-owned equipment and self-sustainment capabilities, which is not always the case for contingents deployed to African Union peace support operations. Given those realities and differences, the range of existing operational support arrangements must also continue to adapt, so that they are equally flexible and fit for purpose to allow their application to African Union peace support operations.

37. The provision of United Nations mission support faces particular challenges in operational contexts such as the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel, as indicated in paragraphs 10, 34 and 36 above and as enumerated in the 2020 assessment of United Nations-African Union cooperation. These include a lack of clarity on reporting and accountability to either the United Nations Security Council or the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, the conceptual difficulties of providing support through operational and reimbursement frameworks designed for military and police contingents deployed outside their home country and practical obstacles to the implementation of the human rights due diligence policy. Such challenges should be kept in view as lessons that should inform decision-making by the Security Council on mandating and support to such peace operations.

## **VI. Conclusion**

38. Over the past 15 years, numerous reports have been submitted to the Security Council on the imperative of predictable and sustainable financing for African Union peace support operations. The importance of such operations as part of the toolkit for responding to crises in Africa, alongside the full range of available United Nations mechanisms, is evident. The case for ensuring that they have the resources required to succeed is clear. The two most viable options for providing support are not theoretical; they have been tested and refined on the basis of lessons learned. The Council has always decided on the modalities for support and financing to African Union peace support operations on a case-by-case basis and is expected to continue to do so. However, the time when requests related to peace support operations could be considered as exceptional circumstances is behind us; to more effectively meet the challenges of today, support to such operations must be considered in a more systematic manner. The collaborative planning and mandating process outlined in the present report provides a standardized mechanism through which the African Union and subregional configurations can collaboratively assess the required response to an emerging crisis. If an African Union peace support operation is identified as the preferred means of responding to the crisis, the process provides a channel for directing to the Security Council a request for United Nations support, including the possibility of access to assessed contributions. This process provides the Council with the assurance that a systematic assessment has been conducted and thus facilitates the Council's decision-making on whether assessed contributions can be accessed.

39. Experience shows that where assessed contributions are not available to peace support operations, those operations lack the predictable, sustainable funding that

they need to ensure cohesion, efficiency and impact. The African Union has taken concrete steps to address that challenge, including through its commitment to increase its financial contribution to its peace support operations by covering 25 per cent of the annual budget for such operations through the Peace Fund.

40. Of the financing models outlined in my 2017 report for the provision of assessed contributions to African Union peace support operations, joint missions and support packages delivered by the United Nations and funded through assessed contributions, including through dedicated support offices, are the two approaches that ensure the provision of support financed in the most predictable and sustainable manner. Support packages funded through trust funds should be avoided because the lack of predictable and sustainable funding limits their impact and creates challenges for planning and expectations management. Through the experience accumulated in a number of collaborative settings and the exchange of expertise in operational support matters, those modalities also contribute to the alignment of processes and procedures and the strengthening of operational planning and oversight capabilities. The choice of approach should be determined by the context of the operation in question, as there is no one-size-fits-all solution to responding to conflict in the African continent. It is vital that every response be designed to ensure the primacy of political solutions in the resolution of the crisis in question. For maximum effect, standard United Nations logistical and administrative arrangements should be adapted to meet the demands of the high operational tempos and robust mandates of African Union peace support operations.

41. The Security Council, in its resolutions [2320 \(2016\)](#) and [2378 \(2017\)](#), placed great emphasis on the need for effective accountability and compliance frameworks. The African Union has stated that the implementation of its compliance framework is an operational necessity that it will continue pursuing in its operations regardless of the need for funding or other partner support. Since 2017, the African Union has made commendable progress in further developing and implementing its compliance framework for international humanitarian law, human rights and conduct and discipline, with the support of the United Nations and partners such as the European Union. Alongside acknowledging the significance of the work done thus far on strengthening human rights protection and accountability frameworks, we should encourage sustained efforts to ensure further progress, bearing in mind that attaining higher standards in compliance is an iterative and ongoing process, as we have learned with United Nations peace operations.

42. The lack of sufficient staffing capacity at headquarters and in the field remains a challenge for the African Union Commission and poses constraints on the capacity-building and other technical assistance provided by the United Nations across all aspects of mission planning, management and operational support. In the specific area of compliance, the current tripartite project among the United Nations, the African Union and the European Union has been instrumental in funding additional staffing capacity in the African Union Commission for the development of the compliance framework and for associated programmes and initiatives. Despite the significant progress made to date, attention and dedicated resources will be required to sustain those efforts, ensure a translation from policy to practice and monitor and evaluate implementation. United Nations Member States should also consider how to support the Commission in addressing those capacity gaps.

43. Obtaining adequate, predictable and sustainable financing for peace support operations in Africa has been a perennial challenge. Notwithstanding the technical aspects related to United Nations support to African Union peace support operations, which continue to evolve, I wish to reiterate that the decision to take forward sustainable financing and expand the scope of mission support for African Union peace support operations is political. On several occasions, I have emphasized the

need for a new generation of peace enforcement missions and counter-terrorist operations, led by regional forces, with guaranteed, predictable funding. The African Union is an obvious partner in that regard. My call is informed by the context and outlook of peace and security in Africa, the significant progress made by the African Union and the United Nations in deepening our partnership, the progress made with regard to strengthening the overall planning, effectiveness, management and oversight of African Union-led peace support operations, and the lessons learned from various peace operations over recent years. It is grounded in my conviction that this is an opportune, timely moment for the Security Council to rise to the challenge of laying the foundation for a new generation of African Union-led, United Nations-supported peace operations on the African continent that blend the respective strength of both organizations in a manner that prioritizes political solutions and maximizes the impact of both uniformed and civilian capabilities.

44. Our collective objective should be to ensure that the African Union has the ability to plan, deploy, manage, sustain and finance its peace support operations. United Nations assessed contributions can provide a more sustainable source of funding towards that objective, particularly if channelled in a manner that can help nurture the African Union's capacities. They can also serve as a tangible representation of the strong partnership between our two organizations, a partnership that is critical for effectively addressing the evolving peace and security challenges in Africa. I urge the Security Council to signal its clear support for providing African Union peace support operations with access to United Nations assessed contributions. This would represent a concrete demonstration that the Council stands ready to break new ground and address a critical gap in the international peace and security architecture, as well as a strong reaffirmation of the willingness of the Council to stem the scourge of armed conflict on the African continent.

---