EXPECTED COUNCIL ACTION
On Monday 6 June the Council is expecting a briefing on the visit to Africa which Council members took from 19 to 26 May. The trip consisted of the following segments, and their respective leaders or co-leaders will be the briefers: AU headquarters in Addis Ababa (led by Council President Ambassador Gerard Araud of France); Sudan (co-led by Ambassador Vitaly Churkin of Russia and Ambassador Susan Rice of the US) and a Somalia-focused visit to Nairobi (co-led by Ambassador Baso Sangqu of South Africa and Ambassador Mark Lyall Grant of the UK).

BACKGROUND
The annual consultations with the AU’s Peace and Security Council (PSC) was the main focus of the 20-21 May visit to Addis Ababa.

The visit to Sudan (from 21 to 23 May in the north part of the country and from 23 to 24 May in the south part of the country) was supposed to focus on a range of issues, including: the upcoming independence of South Sudan; the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement; the work of the two Council-mandated operations in Sudan, the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) and the AU/UN Hybrid Mission in Darfur (UNAMID); and the situation in Abyei. The events related to the takeover of Abyei by the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) on 21 May considerably shifted the focus of the visit.

The visit to Nairobi was designed to enable members to reiterate the Council’s grave concern about the continued inability of the Somali Transitional Federal Institutions (TFI) components to work constructively with each other or the UN. A related part of the message was reaffirming support for the work of Special Representative of the Secretary-General Augustine Mahiga, and urging the TFIs to engage fully, constructively and without further delay in the consultative process facilitated by the Special Representative.

In addition, members of the Council also met with the top leaders of Ethiopia and Kenya.

ADDIS ABABA
The meeting with the PSC was the fifth such annual consultation between the two bodies. (They started in 2007 and have been alternating between the two organisations’ headquarters, in Addis Ababa and New York.) Of the five, this was the longest meeting, lasting from 10:30 am to 5 pm (with a very short lunch break in the middle) and the first one in which country-specific situations took up the bulk of the agenda. In previous years, process issues dominated the meetings, with relatively little time devoted to substance. The agreed agenda for the 21 May meeting was as follows:

1. Crisis Situations:
   - Libya
   - Côte d’Ivoire
   - Somalia
   - Sudan
2. Strengthening of Methods of Work and Cooperation
3. Consideration and Adoption of the Draft Joint Statement

The discussions on Libya took the longest and lasted over two hours. Several of the PSC members were sharply critical of the Council’s approach and of what they considered a misinterpretation of the language of resolutions 1970 and 1973. A particularly sensitive issue was the leadership role of UN envoy Abdel-Elah Al-Khatib versus that of the AU High Level Ad Hoc Committee. (The 5 May meeting of the Contact Group on Libya had previously agreed that Khatib should be the focal point for all mediation efforts and the AU side expressed serious concerns that this approach could side-line the AU’s role.)

The discussion of Côte d’Ivoire took place on the day of the inauguration of President Alassane Ouattara in Yamoussoukro, and it appears that this part of the meeting reflected participants’ relief that the protracted crisis had ended and expressed hope for the country’s future.

On Sudan, members spoke about the aftermath of the referendum, the upcoming independence of the South and of their concerns about increased violence in Darfur and Abyei. On that last issue, members of both...
councils stressed the importance of the July 2009 ruling by The Hague’s Permanent Court of Arbitration. An area of some tension appears to have been the approach to the Darfur Peace Process (DPP), which the PSC has fully embraced, but the Security Council has not with some members distinctly reluctant to do so. (The creation of a better enabling environment for the DPP is seen by those members as essential, including: civil and political rights of participants such that they can exercise their views without fear of retribution; freedom of speech and assembly to allow for open consultations; freedom of movement for participants and UNAMID; proportional participation among Darfurians; freedom from harassment, arbitrary arrest and intimidation; and freedom from interference by the government or armed movements.) These formulations were included in the final communiqué despite initial resistance from some of the PSC members to this language.

On Somalia, the key issue was the financing for the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) which the African side would like to be fully covered through UN assessed contributions and which several members of the Security Council oppose on the grounds that the UN should not be fully funding an operation unless it has command over it. Members of the PSC argued for the need of predictable, reliable and timely resources for AMISOM, including reimbursement for contingent-owned equipment. Members of the Security Council, while noting the recommendations in this respect of the PSC of 15 October 2010, stopped short of willing to include any new commitments in the communiqué.

The communiqué issued at the end of the meeting was considerably longer than the final documents from the previous consultations and, also unlike the previous documents, was mainly focused on the four situation-specific issues.

SUDAN

When the delegation left for Khartoum late in the day on 21 May, the itinerary included an evening and a day of meetings in Khartoum, followed by a visit to Abyei on 23 May, and a trip to Juba for 23-24 May. However, in the evening of 21 May, Abyei was attacked and subsequently taken over by SAF, turning the disputed area into the key focus of most of Council meetings in Sudan.

Members received their first briefing about the unfolding events in Abyei from the Special Representative and head of UNMIS, Haile Menkerios, on the evening of their arrival and were kept abreast of events through subsequent briefings during their visit.

The next day, Sunday, 22 May, the Council delegation had been scheduled to meet with Foreign Minister Ali Karti and Vice President Ali Osman Taha. These meetings were cancelled only shortly before they were expected to take place. While it seems that there was already interest in reacting speedily and firmly to the events in Abyei, the sudden cancellation of the high-level meetings may have reinforced the need in Council members’ minds for a swift reaction.

The Council members took a procedurally unusual step of issuing a press statement while away from New York. Briefly, there was also some discussion of having a presidential statement rather than a press statement. But this would have to be adopted in a formal session of the Council and there is a complex Council procedure for agreeing to meet away from headquarters. (While article 28, paragraph 3 of the UN Charter states that “the Security Council may hold meetings at such places other than the seat of the Organization as in its judgment will best facilitate its work”, in practice there have only been a dozen or so such meetings since 1946, with the last one held in Nairobi in 2004 and these meetings require consideration by Council’s Standing Committee on Meetings Away from Headquarters.) Some Council members indicated that they would need to consult their capitals on such a proposal. As this could have meant a 24 hour delay, it was decided that a press statement which could be quickly turned around was the better option.

The statement condemned the “escalatory military operations” being undertaken by SAF in and around Abyei town, including the shelling of the UNMIS compound in Abyei. In addition, the statement deplored the unilateral dissolution of the Abyei administration and called for its re-establishment and for the Sudan government to halt its military operations and withdraw immediately from Abyei. It also condemned the southern forces’ attack on the UNMIS convoy on 19 May and referred to the attack as a breach of agreements and a criminal act.

Several elements of the Sudan programme of the trip had to be revised due to the cancelation of the Abyei part of the trip. Originally, the Council was supposed to meet, separately, with representatives of the two main ethnic groups in the disputed area, the Misseriya and the Dinka. With Abyei being overtaken and emptied of civilian population, alternative locations needed to be found for the meetings with the representatives of the two groups, one in a north-controlled location and one in the south, due to the tribes’ respective alliances. This meeting with the Misseriya took place in Khartoum whereas representatives of the Dinka travelled to Wau in the western part of the south, a location added to Council itinerary mainly for the purpose of that meeting.

In Khartoum, other meetings included:
• a visit by some members to the Mayo camp near Khartoum for displaced Southerners whose inhabitants, mostly Dinka, shared their concerns related to the 9 July secession of the south and the dilemmas they face when deciding whether to stay up north or return to the south;
• a meeting with the deputy foreign minister (who stood in for the foreign minister) during which members of the Council were accompanied by...
Special Representative Menkerios and UNMIS senior leadership;
• a briefing by Special Representative Ibrahim Gambari and his senior staff on UNAMID; and
• a meeting with former South African President Thabo Mbeki (who is engaged in a number of Sudan-related mediation efforts).

In Juba, the future capital of South Sudan, Council members spent several hours with President Salva Kiir and his top ministers during a meeting followed by a working dinner hosted by the government.

On its last day in Sudan, prior to the afternoon departure for Nairobi, some members of the Council flew to the village of Malau in Jonglei state where they watched a re-enactment of a cattle rescue operation by the Livestock Protection Unit of the South Sudan Police Service. (Cattle theft has been a centuries-old widespread phenomenon in the area, in recent years however, it has become a serious threat to stability and security in the state due to the prevalent presence of small arms in the post-conflict period and a considerable number of fatalities that result from cattle raids. UNMIS is helping to train the Livestock Protection Units in addressing this problem.) Later that day, they also toured the Jebel Kujur way station in Juba which is operated by UN High Commissioner for Refugees to facilitate returns south of displaced persons from the northern part of the country. They also met with representatives of the civil society and received a briefing by UNMIS staff on the planning for the follow on mission.

COUNCIL DYNAMICS
The dynamics among Council members during the mission seemed to vary slightly from location to location.

In Addis Ababa, in particular during the discussion of Libya, most PSC members were very outspoken in their criticism of the how Council resolutions 1970 and 1973 were implemented in practice, with some alleging that NATO was “colonising” Africa and that the law of the jungle had replaced the international law. In response, apparently, some Council members who abstained on the adoption of resolution 1973, restated their reasons for doing so and some also highlighted their own concerns over the way events have unfolded in Libya since. But at least one of the abstaining members apparently also defended the prerogative of the Council with respect to any decisions on Libya.

In Sudan the delegation appeared united in their sense of deep concern over the Abyei developments. Members collectively were upset over the cancelled meetings with top Sudanese government officials. This resulted in a speedy decision to respond with a strong condemnatory statement, though there were apparently differences regarding the format of the statement, in particular regarding the possibility of holding a formal Council meeting in order to adopt a presidential statement. Russia, in particular, apparently felt that this procedural step would create a precedent and because of that the delegation would need to consult the capital. In order to come out with a statement in a timely fashion, members opted for a press statement instead. Publicly, the message from the Council members was strong and united. During a press briefing at the end of the stay in Khartoum, co-leaders of the delegation, Russia’s Ambassador Vitaly Churkin and US Ambassador Susan Rice, were blunt in expressing their condemnation of the violence in Abyei and voiced members’ shared deep sense of frustration over the inability to meet with top Sudanese government officials. Referring to the fact that the official reason for the last minute cancelation of the Council’s meeting with the Sudanese foreign minister was his illness, Amb. Churkin stated that the Council wished him a speedy and complete recovery.

SOMALIA
The Council delegation visited Nairobi on 24-25 May for an evening and a full day of Somalia-focused meetings. Members of the Council were briefed by the Special Representative Mahiga and UN Political Office for Somalia’s senior staff. They had a working lunch with senior staff from the different UN agencies and programmes working on Somalia out of Nairobi. They also met with: representatives from the Intergovernmental Authority for Development or IGAD, the relevant subregional body that has played an ongoing role on Somalia; some 50 representatives of Somali civil society groups (many of them also based in Nairobi); and leaders from Puntland and Galmudug. The longest and apparently most intense meeting was with the President, the Prime Minister, Transitional Federal Government ministers, the Speaker and members of the Transitional Federal Parliament of Somalia. The Council members conveyed a clear and unanimous message of demand for the different leaders to stop their infighting, to focus on implementing reforms and to cooperate with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, among other issues.
occassion of the announcement of the formal results of the Southern Sudan referendum.

- S/PRST/2010/21 (22 October 2010) reaffirmed Council commitment to strengthening its partnership with the AU PSC.
- S/PRST/2009/26 (26 October 2009) reiterated the importance of a more effective strategic relationship between the UN and the AU, underlining the importance of expediting the implementation of the UN-AU Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme.
- S/PRST/2008/24 (24 June 2008) was a statement on Abyei.

LETTER


COMMUNIQUÉS FROM THE CONSULTATIVE MEETINGS BETWEEN THE AU PSC AND THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Communiqué adopted at the 21 May 2011 consultative meeting between the members of the Security Council and the AU PSC.

- S/2010/392 (9 July 2010) was the communiqué issued after a consultative meeting at UN headquarters with the AU PSC and top AU Commission officials.
- S/2009/303 (11 June 2009) was the report of the Council mission to the AU, Rwanda, the DRC and Liberia, which contained the communiqué of 16 May 2009 from the consultative meeting between the members of the Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council.
- S/2008/263 (18 April 2008) was a letter from the permanent representative of South Africa to the president of the Security Council containing the joint communiqué of the 17 April 2008 meeting in New York between the two councils.
- S/2007/421 (11 July 2007) was the report of the Security Council visit to Addis Ababa, Accra, Abidjan, Khartoum and Kinshasa containing the joint communiqué from the 16 June 2007 meeting.
- Security Council Press Statement
- SC/2006/10 (22 May 2011) was issued in Khartoum by the president of the Security Council on the situation in Abyei.
Visit of Security Council Delegation to Africa

SECURITY COUNCIL REPORT STAFF
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