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Strengthening the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union on issues of peace and security in Africa, including the work of the United Nations Office to the African Union

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report, submitted pursuant to the statement of the President of the Security Council dated 16 December 2014 ([S/PRST/2014/27](#)), provides an update on the implementation of the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security, including in the context of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and rising global food and fuel prices, and on the status of the strategic partnership and efforts to enhance it. It also provides a description of the main activities carried out by the United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU) and the United Nations system since the issuance of my previous report ([S/2021/763](#)) on 30 August 2021, including those pertaining to Security Council resolutions [2320 \(2016\)](#), [2378 \(2017\)](#) and [2457 \(2019\)](#).

II. The United Nations and African Union strategic partnership

United Nations Security Council and African Union Peace and Security Council

2. The United Nations Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council continued, in virtual and in-person formats, to intensify their strategic partnership to address the complex peace and security challenges on the continent, including those associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, gender inequality, governance deficits, terrorism and violent extremism. Attention was also paid to measures for mitigating the effects of climate change and the armed conflict in Ukraine, which have aggravated the energy, food and human security vulnerabilities on the continent.

3. The President of the Security Council and the Chairperson of the Peace and Security Council regularly engaged through monthly informal meetings, facilitated by UNOAU, during which they exchanged on the programmes of work of both Councils and related matters.



4. The Special Representatives and Envoys of the Secretary-General as well as their African Union counterparts continued, sometimes jointly, to brief the Security Council, the Peace and Security Council and the three African non-permanent members of the Security Council (A3) on country and region-specific as well as thematic issues, in order to inform the decision-making processes of both organizations. Within that context, the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations participated in the eighth African Union High-level Seminar on Peace and Security in Africa, held at the ministerial level from 2 to 4 December 2021 in Oran, Algeria, which was aimed at strengthening coherence, cooperation and coordination between the Peace and Security Council and the A3 in discharging their respective mandates.

5. On 16 and 17 December 2021, the Peace and Security Council hosted on a virtual platform the sixth joint informal seminar and the fifteenth annual joint consultative meeting between the Peace and Security Council and the members of the Security Council. At the joint informal seminar, discussions centred on securing predictable and sustainable financing for peace support operations led by the African Union authorized by the Security Council and on enhancing cooperation and relevant working methods between the two Councils. The deliberations at the fifteenth annual joint consultative meeting encompassed the reconfiguration of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), the situation in the Sahel region, efforts at combating terrorism and violent extremism, and support to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Mission in Mozambique. The members of the two Councils highlighted the urgency of addressing the root causes of conflicts, especially those linked to socioeconomic development and governance challenges. They also expressed the need to strengthen coordination and cooperation among the Peace and Security Council, the A3, the Security Council and partners.

6. To prepare for the consultations, from 22 to 24 November 2021, the United Nations, through UNOAU, facilitated a meeting between the Peace and Security Council Committee of Experts and the three African non-permanent members of the Security Council and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, known as the African Members of the Security Council plus one (A3+1) in New York. The Committee of Experts also held informal consultations with the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa on 23 November 2021 and received briefings by the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, the Department of Peace Operations and the Office of Counter-Terrorism.

United Nations Secretariat and African Union Commission

7. On 1 December 2021, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General met for the fifth United Nations-African Union annual conference to review progress in the implementation of the Joint Framework and the African Union-United Nations Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. At the conference, they discussed country and regional developments, including in the Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Libya, the Sahel region, Somalia, South Sudan and the Sudan, and agreed to initiate an independent assessment on security and development in the Sahel region together with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Group of Five for the Sahel. They commended the cooperation between the World Health Organization and the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention to support African States during the COVID-19 pandemic response and underscored the need to scale up the response in Africa, accelerate vaccine distribution and adhere to standards of quality, predictability and shelf life. They stressed the importance of strengthening the African Continental Free Trade Area to engender domestic economic recovery and focus on the broader attainment of sustainable and inclusive

development. The Secretary-General and the Chairperson also highlighted the effects of climate change on peace and security and agreed to further cooperate towards the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held at Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, between 7 and 18 November 2022. They expressed concern over the multiple recent unconstitutional changes of government and the deterioration of human rights in some parts of the continent. Furthermore, they reiterated their quest for a predictable, sustainable and flexible financing formula for peace support operations led by the African Union and authorized by the Security Council.

8. On 5 November 2021, the United Nations-African Union Joint Task Force on Peace and Security held its twentieth consultative meeting in virtual format. At the meeting, the Joint Task Force took stock of peace and security developments in the Central African Republic, Chad, Ethiopia, Guinea, Libya, Mali, Mozambique, Somalia and the Sudan. Participants also exchanged views on the financing of African Union peace support operations and the impact of climate change on peace and security in Africa. Preceded by technical-level meetings on country-specific and thematic issues, the Joint Task Force met again virtually on 5 May 2022 for its twenty-first meeting and discussed the complex political transitions in Burkina Faso, Chad, Guinea and Mali, the governance and security situation in the Sahel region, and peace and security developments in the Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Libya, Mozambique, Somalia and the Sudan. Views were also exchanged on the repercussions of the war in Ukraine for Africa's food and energy security. Both organizations reaffirmed their commitment to prioritizing conflict prevention, mediation, inclusive dialogue and reconciliation processes, promoting the full, equal and meaningful participation of women and young people in governance processes and scaling up joint field visits and assessments of conflict situations and coordinated messaging on peace, security, human rights and development.

9. At the technical level, and as a follow-up to the fourteenth United Nations-African Union-regional economic communities and mechanisms consultative meeting on the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts (desk-to-desk), three United Nations-African Union technical working groups were established, on elections; the prevention of violent extremism and terrorism; and African Union peace support operations and ad hoc security arrangements, to enhance information-sharing and coordination.

III. The United Nations and African Union operational partnership

Challenges and opportunities for peace and security in Africa

10. Many African countries continue to face peace, security and socioeconomic challenges that negatively affect the continent. During the reporting period, Southern Africa experienced hurricanes and flash floods associated with climate change and in the Horn of Africa region, several communities faced the threat of starvation following four consecutive failed rainy seasons, a climatic event not seen in at least 40 years. The Sahel region experienced an increase in the scope and intensity of terrorist attacks by Da'esh and Al-Qaida affiliates, who continued to advance in parts of Africa, some targeting humanitarian personnel. Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali and the Sudan were subject to unconstitutional changes of government.

11. In Northern Africa, the political impasse in Libya had a negative impact on progress on the security and economic tracks. While the 2020 agreement for a complete and permanent ceasefire in Libya continued to hold, armed groups kept

mobilizing in and around Tripoli, as well as in the southern region. The security situation remained volatile, hence the urgency of finalizing a constitutional basis to hold national elections as soon as possible.

12. In Western Africa, in the Sahel region, there have been increasing incidences of terrorist acts, violent extremism and intercommunal crises. Terrorist groups in the region continued to exploit governance challenges, socioeconomic fragility and local grievances. This was further exacerbated by the intricate relationships between armed groups and criminal networks. The recent spate of unconstitutional changes of government witnessed in Burkina Faso, Guinea and Mali have further complicated the security landscape. Climate change also presented critical challenges, further aggravating the socioeconomic destitution.

13. In Central Africa, notwithstanding the unilateral ceasefire declared by President Faustin-Archange Touadéra in December 2021, attacks against civilians by all parties to the conflict in the Central African Republic continued to pose serious threats to the implementation of the 2019 Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation. However, national authorities have taken ownership of the peace process and are taking steps to move it forward, in close consultation with their international partners and with the support of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA). The republican dialogue was held from 21 to 27 March 2022, bringing together key national stakeholders, despite the withdrawal of several opposition groups and parties. On 1 August, President Touadéra appointed 11 members of the committee for the follow-up of the recommendations of the republican dialogue, which reflect key outcomes of the 2015 Bangui Forum on National Reconciliation and the 2019 Political Agreement. In addition, key framework documents related to security sector reform and modalities for the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation process have been validated. In relation to Chad, on 8 August, the Doha “pre-dialogue” with the armed opposition culminated in a peace agreement signed by at least 36 of the over 50 participating rebel groups, enabling their participation in the inclusive and sovereign national dialogue in Chad that was scheduled to start on 20 August.

14. In the Great Lakes region, the tenth Summit of the Regional Oversight Mechanism of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region was held on 24 February 2022 in Kinshasa. Signatory countries and the guarantor institutions, namely, the United Nations, the African Union, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and SADC, committed to enhancing cooperation to eliminate the threat posed by foreign armed groups in the region and strengthening regional economic integration.

15. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the resurgence of the Mouvement du 23 and armed attacks by local armed groups and the resultant counter-operations by the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo prompted the engagement of the conclave of heads of State of the East African Community, led by President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya, under which a two-track approach was agreed: a political process to facilitate consultations between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and local armed groups, and the urgent deployment of a regional force under the leadership of the national Government, to help contain and, where necessary, fight the negative forces who continue to pose a threat to peace and security in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region. On 28 May, on the margins of the Extraordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government of the African Union held in Malabo, the Chairperson of the African Union, Macky Sall, announced that he had engaged with the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Félix Tshisekedi, and the President of Rwanda, Paul Kagame, to de-escalate tensions and nominated the President of Angola, João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço, in his capacity as Chair of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, to resolve the

dispute between the two countries. President Lourenço facilitated a mini-summit on 6 July in Luanda with Presidents Kagame and Tshisekedi at which a road map to establish a climate of trust and resolve the security crisis in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo was agreed upon.

16. In Mozambique, in July 2021, security organs, working with the SADC Mission in Mozambique and Rwandan forces, helped to degrade the capacities and capabilities of the insurgents operating in the northern province of Cabo Delgado, preventing a spillover of the insurgency to other provinces and beyond. Beyond the military operations, preventive diplomacy initiatives and the United Nations-led humanitarian operations, sustainable peace and stability hinge on redoubling nationally led comprehensive approaches aimed at prioritizing service delivery, economic opportunities and inclusion to address the root causes and drivers of armed conflicts.

17. In Eastern Africa, in the Horn of Africa region, several countries continued to face challenging transition and peace processes. In Ethiopia, the declaration by the Federal Government of an indefinite humanitarian truce on 24 March 2022 helped to facilitate the flow of emergency assistance into the Tigray region, although basic services continued to be suspended and the humanitarian situation remained precarious. Further confidence-building measures need to be fully implemented and a concrete commitment from the parties to peacefully resolve the conflict is required to build on the momentum for a negotiated political solution. The demonstration of political will to reach an agreement on the issue of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam and the dispute over the Sudan-Ethiopia border would also serve to de-escalate tensions in the region.

18. In Somalia, the long-delayed indirect election process concluded on 15 May 2022 with the election of President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud. The new administration has set its political priorities, including finalization of the constitution and deepening of federalism, dialogue and reconciliation, the fight against al-Shabaab, and responding to the drought and the resulting humanitarian situation.

19. In the Sudan, the political transition faced a major setback following the coup of 25 October 2021. This has plunged the country into persistent and widespread unrest and political instability. The political crisis continued, as well as violence against civilians, with the risk of further escalation. Violent clashes erupted, including in Darfur, and the implementation of the Juba Peace Agreement's security arrangements and of the National Plan for the Protection of Civilians is lagging.

20. The COVID-19 pandemic has plunged Africa into its worst economic recession in half a century. The gross domestic product contracted by an estimated 3.2 per cent in 2020 and millions of persons were pulled into extreme poverty, hence exacerbating conflict drivers on the continent. Africa's COVID-19 response strategy continued to register progress in fulfilling its twofold mandate of identifying gaps in the COVID-19 pandemic response strategy and proposing ways to plug those gaps to ensure the strong recovery of health systems, alongside socioeconomic recovery.

21. However, impediments remain regarding vaccine uptake and the need to revitalize routine health-care services to improve Africa's capacities and preparedness for future pandemic outbreaks. As countries look towards a post-COVID recovery, it is evident that the pandemic has undercut the provision of public and social services. The pandemic has also raised the urgency for Africa to turn the crisis into an opportunity to ardently pursue self-reliance. In that connection, the entry into force of the Treaty for the Establishment of the African Medicines Agency on 5 October 2021 is a step forward and could pave the way for Africa to independently authorize and produce vaccines and medicines.

22. The armed conflict in Ukraine is also having a serious impact on the already fragile economies of many African countries. Delays or failure to reverse such situations could further fuel social unrest and political instability on the continent. It is against this backdrop that on 3 June 2022, President Macky Sall of Senegal, in his capacity as Chair of the African Union, along with Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, visited Sochi in the Russian Federation to address the impacts of the conflict on the continent and call for its end. On 20 June, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine virtually briefed the Bureau of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union. In the meeting, President Sall indicated that Africa remained committed to respecting the rules of international law, the peaceful resolution of conflicts and freedom of trade, while Chairperson Moussa Faki Mahamat underscored the urgent need for dialogue.

23. From 30 April to 4 May, the Secretary-General paid a Ramadan solidarity visit to Senegal, as the rotating Chair of the African Union, as well as to the Niger and Nigeria. In his meetings with President Macky Sall of Senegal, President Mohamed Bazoum of the Niger and President Muhammadu Buhari of Nigeria, he stressed that the aggravating simultaneous food, energy and financial crises required increased investment and debt relief as part of a global strategy to support developing countries.

24. The engagement of the United Nations with the Russian Federation, Ukraine and Türkiye led to the Black Sea Grain Initiative, signed by the three countries with the United Nations signing as a witness, as well as the memorandum of understanding between the United Nations and the Russian Federation on promoting Russian food products and fertilizers on the world markets. The United Nations is also coordinating efforts with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank for emergency financing facilities to bolster the resilience of countries hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic and the repercussions of the armed conflict in Ukraine.

25. From 23 to 27 May, the African Union convened an Extraordinary African Union Humanitarian Summit and Pledging Conference in Malabo, at which the Secretary-General was represented by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the African Union also attended the Conference. The Summit provided an opportunity to galvanize African Union efforts to help respond to the mounting humanitarian needs on the continent. Among other things, the Summit underscored the imperative to prevent and manage conflicts, climate change, disasters, forced displacement, health diseases and food insecurity as well as leverage post-conflict situations to create conditions conducive to the return and reintegration of refugees and internally displaced persons.

26. The African Union further convened, in Malabo on 28 May, a second Extraordinary Summit dedicated to the issues of terrorism and unconstitutional changes of government, with the participation of the Special Representative to the African Union and the Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism. Notably, the participants urgently called on the Peace and Security Council to: (a) operationalize its subcommittee on counter-terrorism; (b) mandate the African Union Commission, working with regional economic communities and regional mechanisms, to work on a comprehensive strategic plan of action on countering violent extremism; and (c) establish a subcommittee on unconstitutional changes of government and reactivate its subcommittee on sanctions. The Summit outcomes present opportunities for the United Nations to work closely with the African Union to ensure the operationalization of the various subcommittees, within the context of the United Nations-African Union partnership.

27. Climate change continued to have an adverse impact on Africa's peace and security landscape, amplifying fragilities and vulnerabilities on the continent,

including the occurrence of natural disasters, such as increasing cyclones in South-East Africa and floods in South Africa, as well as famine across the Horn of Africa region. Climate change is thus further aggravating Africa's energy, food and resource insecurity. The United Nations and the African Climate Policy Centre will continue to support the African Union's climate change mitigation and adaptation policies, including in support of the African Union Commission's undertaking to mainstream such measures across its departments.

28. In view of the multiple challenges affecting the African continent, the prospect for optimally harnessing opportunities on the continent lies in a full, fast-tracked and effective implementation of the institutional reform process of the African Union, including the division of labour between the African Union, regional economic communities and regional mechanisms, and their member States. At its thirty-fifth ordinary session, held on 5 and 6 February, the African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government decided to extend the deadline for submitting the outcome of the remaining African Union reform priorities by one year, to February 2023. A successful reform process could pave the way for delivering strong United Nations support for the implementation of projects on which to anchor Africa's recovery and renaissance.

Partnership in conflict prevention and peacemaking

29. Within the context of the foregoing security landscape, the imperative to prioritize the conflict prevention agenda through local, national and inter-State peace initiatives across the continent is critical.

30. The increasingly deteriorating security and humanitarian situation in the Sahel region calls for renewed, immediate and collective action. At the fifth annual conference, held on 1 December 2021, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General agreed on the need to jointly initiate an independent assessment of security and development in the Sahel region. On 2 May 2022, the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission invited the former President of the Niger, Mahamadou Issoufou, as Chair of an Independent High-level Panel on Security and Development in the Sahel, to oversee the assessment process. The Panel will take strategic stock of the ongoing peace, security and governance efforts under way in the Sahel region and make recommendations for strengthening international coordination in order to effectively address the multidimensional crisis in the region.

31. In Libya, the United Nations continued to support the establishment of a constitutional framework for the conduct of national elections, with the direct involvement of the House of Representatives and the High Council of State, while recognizing the progress made thus far. The Secretary-General continued to encourage the Libyan stakeholders to intensify national reconciliation efforts, with the support of the United Nations and the African Union, in order to address the root causes of the conflict. It remains critical to secure both the consensus on and Libyan ownership of initiatives for ending the transitional political phase.

32. In Mali, the United Nations has further supported the African Union and ECOWAS positions in responding to the unconstitutional changes of government, while encouraging the transitional authorities to implement a realistic transition calendar consistent with the decision of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government. The announcement on 10 June by the Malian transition government of a 24-month transition timeline is a positive step in that regard. The participants at the sixty-first ordinary session of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government, held on 3 July, agreed to shortened transitions of 24 months in Burkina Faso and Mali and the lifting of economic and financial sanctions and demanded that

the de facto authorities in Guinea submit an acceptable transition timetable by 1 August. However, as at 17 August, the latter had yet to be submitted. The United Nations, the African Union and ECOWAS will continue to implement joint initiatives to support the transition processes in Burkina Faso, Guinea and Mali.

33. In Chad, the United Nations system and partners continued to support the International Support Group for Chad, led by the African Union, in promoting an inclusive transition and dialogue process that leads to a timely return to constitutional order. The transition remained severely underfunded, with only 20 per cent of the \$1.8 billion road map budget secured. At a Peacebuilding Commission ambassadorial-level meeting on Chad held on 2 December 2021, the African Union High Representative for Chad, Ambassador Basile Ikouébé, underlined the importance of continued support by international partners, including to mobilize more resources for the implementation of the transition road map.

34. In Cameroon, as a follow-up to a joint high-level visit by the African Union, the International Organization of la Francophonie and the Commonwealth in November 2019, the United Nations continued to work in collaboration with those organizations in view of supporting efforts towards a comprehensive dialogue on the situation in the North-West and South-West regions.

35. In the Sudan, the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, the African Union Commission and the IGAD secretariat formed a trilateral mechanism to jointly facilitate a solution to the political crisis aimed at restoring a civilian-led democratic transition.

36. In Ethiopia, the United Nations continued to provide its full support to mediation efforts led by former President of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo, in his capacity as Special Envoy of the African Union for the Horn of Africa, backed by other regional and international partners.

37. In Somalia, the continued coordination among the United Nations, the African Union, IGAD, the European Union and other partners was critical in delivering the conclusion of the long-delayed indirect parliamentary electoral process that culminated with the indirect presidential election of 15 May 2022.

38. With regard to elections, the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs provided support to the African Union Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security in the development of an African Union guide on electoral assistance to the African Union member States, aimed at creating a coherent strategy for electoral assistance to election management bodies and enhancing the African Union's capacity to execute its mandate of promoting democratic elections and good governance.

39. The United Nations also supported the African Union Commission in the organization of a forum to reflect on the recent increase in unconstitutional changes of government on the continent. The forum, held from 15 to 17 March in Accra, provided a platform for the Peace and Security Council, member States and other relevant stakeholders to discuss and identify gaps and solutions to relevant normative frameworks of the African Union and regional economic communities and policy pathways to overcome the challenge of unconstitutional changes of government in Africa. In addition, the United Nations Development Programme and the African Union Commission are working on establishing a joint transitions facility to prevent and respond to the recent surge in unconstitutional changes of government.

40. In the context of ongoing support to the African Union initiative "Silencing the Guns in Africa", the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the African Union Commission, with the technical assistance of the Regional Centre on Small Arms in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States, supported national campaigns in Madagascar, the Niger and Uganda. As part of the Africa Amnesty

Month for the surrender and collection of illegally owned weapons, beneficiary States organized campaigns from September 2021 to April 2022 to raise awareness, collect and publicly destroy weapons voluntarily surrendered by civilians and enhance capacities in stockpile management and community-based policing. In total, at least 1,497 weapons were collected and destroyed.

41. Partnering with the African Union Commission and the World Bank, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) contributed to a multi-year programme to strengthen the early warning systems of the African Union and regional economic communities and mechanisms through human rights integration and capacity-building, including training and the development of a course manual.

42. Meanwhile, the African Women Leaders Network continued to support the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda, including through its 29 national chapters. The second Africa Forum on Women, Peace and Security, held virtually on 13 and 14 December 2021, underscored the need to enhance the monitoring and evaluation of continental frameworks and mechanisms. In addition, the United Nations and the African Union signed up as board members of the Compact on Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action. Led by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the Compact is an intergenerational, global movement that calls for the redesign of peace and security and humanitarian processes to systematically and meaningfully include women and girls in the decisions that affect their lives.

43. The United Nations, through the Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, worked closely with the African Union Commission and its African Youth Ambassadors for Peace to advance the youth, peace and security agenda, including in the context of the High-level Global Conference on Youth-Inclusive Peace Processes, which was held virtually on 20 and 21 January 2022. The United Nations also supported the reflection meeting on youth, peace and security, convened by the Peace and Security Council in Burundi on 25 April, which provided an opportunity to share good practices and the status of the development of related national action plans in Africa.

Partnership in peacekeeping and peace support operations

44. Despite the constraints imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the United Nations and the African Union continued to explore and implement innovative ways of engaging, including in virtual formats, in the development of peace support operations policies and other guiding documents; sharing of information, knowledge and expertise; force generation; and joint reporting in the conduct of peace operations.

45. In the Central African Republic, MINUSCA continued to engage as part of its good offices mandate with international partners and the region, including the African Union, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the European Union, to enhance coordination of efforts with the view to advancing the peace process. UNOAU continued to provide expert advice and technical support aimed at the effective operationalization of the African Union military observer mission in the Central African Republic by supporting the signing of a memorandum of understanding between MINUSCA and the military observer mission that specifies the procedures for deployment, safety and security, and logistical support for activities assigned by the Peace and Security Council.

46. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region, the United Nations maintained regular strategic dialogues with the African Union, both at Headquarters and in the field through the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and the Office of the

Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region, to assess complementarity of actions, and coordinated messages, when appropriate, in support of peace and security in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region.

47. In Somalia, the United Nations, the African Union, IGAD, the European Union and the Federal Government of Somalia worked closely within the context of the Quartet to implement Security Council resolution 2568 (2021). The sustained engagement facilitated the submission to the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of a joint proposal on the strategic objectives, size and composition of the reconfigured AMISOM, leading to the establishment of the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) on 1 April, in accordance with the related Peace and Security Council decision and Security Council resolution 2628 (2022). UNOAU participated in the review and development of the guidance documents, including the ATMIS Statement of Unit Requirements and reconfiguration plan. UNOAU also provided technical support for the assessment and selection processes of formed police units and individual police officers in Nigeria and Kenya for deployment to ATMIS.

48. On 6 July, the Under-Secretary-General for Operational Support and the African Union Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security co-hosted an interactive dialogue with ATMIS troop- and police-contributing countries to exchange views on logistics support implications arising from resolution 2628 (2022). The meeting confirmed the collective commitment to reconfigure ATMIS and support the transition of security responsibilities from ATMIS to the Somali security forces.

49. In South Sudan, amid delays in the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan and heightened tensions between the parties, the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), IGAD, the African Union Mission in South Sudan and the reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission jointly undertook extensive good offices engagements with the South Sudanese stakeholders to encourage rapprochement, appealing for calm and urging the parties to refocus on the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement. In March, UNMISS joined the African Union and IGAD for a trilateral assessment on the electoral and constitution-making needs of South Sudan. UNMISS also provided support for the visits of the Peace and Security Council in March and the African Union High-level Ad Hoc Committee of Five in June. On 4 August, the parties to the Revitalized Agreement signed a road map extending the transitional period for 24 months to complete the outstanding tasks in the peace agreement.

50. In the Lake Chad basin region, various United Nations entities and offices continued to collaborate with the African Union in its support to the Multinational Joint Task Force against Boko Haram, including technical advice and expertise to enhance its operational capabilities. They also supported the implementation of the Regional Strategy for the Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience of the Boko Haram-affected Areas in the Lake Chad Basin Region, including support in articulating its action plan for 2022–2024. Furthermore, in support of the Lake Chad Basin Commission and its member States, the Office of Counter-Terrorism, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate designed a joint project to support the screening, prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration of persons associated with Boko Haram, implemented in close coordination with the African Union, among others.

51. The United Nations continued to provide support in strengthening African Union peace support operations and the capacity of the African Standby Force. UNOAU provided technical assistance in the review and development of guidance documents and African Standby Force rostering systems through the African Union strategic support groups for the civilian, military and police components. UNOAU further supported the development and delivery of 38 training and other capacity

development programmes to African Standby Force regional standby personnel preparing to deploy into African Union-mandated and authorized peace support operations. UNOAU further facilitated the development of strategic lift capacity for the African Union Continental Movements Control Centre and regional movements control centres. In addition, UNOAU worked closely with the African Union and regional economic communities and regional mechanisms in providing support to the development of the 2021–2025 workplan on the enhancement of the African Standby Force, due to be submitted to the African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Defence, Safety and Security in November 2022.

52. The Department of Operational Support continued to work with the African Union to strengthen collaboration on operational support both at the institutional level and in various operational contexts. This included efforts to deepen mutual understanding and promote interoperability and complementarity on operational support matters through the knowledge and expertise exchange programme. The programme has been refocused from a staff exchange format towards the creation of collaborative networks of African Union and United Nations practitioners committed to sharing best practices, expertise and lessons learned on operational support issues.

53. Considering the multiplicity of violent conflicts on the continent, the protection of children in armed conflict and related capacity within African Union peace support operations is of paramount importance. UNOAU, in collaboration with the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and the United Nations Children's Fund, supported the African Union in strengthening its coordination efforts through the African Union Coordination Group on Children in Conflict Situations. In April 2022, UNOAU and the Office of the Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict completed a two-day virtual coordination and capacity-building training session on child protection, with the participation of African Union entities. In June, as part of the commemoration of the Day of the African Child, the Special Representative to the African Union and the Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security reiterated their commitment to strengthen their cooperation to better protect children and to increase prevention efforts.

Partnership in peacebuilding and the rule of law

54. The United Nations continued to work with the African Union to strengthen responses in the areas of peacebuilding and the rule of law.

55. On 11 November 2021, the Chairperson of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Chairperson of the Peace and Security Council convened a virtual informal consultative meeting to identify ways of further enhancing cooperation between the two bodies on the accompaniment of critical ongoing political transitions in Africa in the pursuit of peacebuilding and sustaining peace. Discussions highlighted the importance of the nexus among peace, security, governance and development, and the need for the United Nations to do more to combat the regression of democracy and the spread of terrorism in parts of Africa. They called for the full operationalization of relevant toolkits and predictable financing for peacebuilding, more frequent exchanges, alignment of their programmes of work and representation of the African Union in all relevant Peacebuilding Commission meetings, and support for security sector reform, disarmament, meaningful participation of women and young people, and the centrality of human rights in conflict prevention.

56. The United Nations also continued its partnership with the African Union in enhancing coordination on issues of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, including through online training sessions. At a meeting of the African Union Standing Committee on Small Arms and Light Weapons and Disarmament,

Demobilization and Reintegration held on 21 April, participants took note of the need to revisit the Bamako Declaration on an African Common Position on the Illicit Proliferation, Circulation and Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons of 1 December 2000 ahead of the Fourth United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

57. The United Nations further supported the implementation of the African Union mine action strategy by identifying capacity gaps and developing the Mine Action and Explosive Remnants of War Strategic Framework. The United Nations supported the development of the African Union safety and security policy and standard operating procedures for staff of the African Union Commission and installations in the field missions and the African Union policy on the management of recovered weapons in peace support operations.

58. In addition, the Global Fusion Cells Programme of the Office of Counter-Terrorism is being implemented in cooperation with the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, the United Nations police, the International Criminal Police Organization and the African Centre for Studies and Research on Terrorism in support of national counter-terrorism capacities in Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana, Mozambique, Togo and Uganda.

IV. Support to African Union peace support operations

59. Following the signing of the Joint Declaration by the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission in December 2018, both organizations further recommitted to working together on key priorities at the technical level, while political engagement and negotiations continued at the Security Council on predictable and sustainable financing for African Union peace support operations.

60. The African Union, using the interest earned on its Peace Fund investments provided by its member States, prepared an inaugural budget to use the funds for mediation, capacity-building and specific projects in support of peace support operations. The Special Representative to the African Union continued to participate, as an ex officio member, in meetings of the Peace Fund Board of Trustees. Although most of the Peace Fund's organs have been established, its secretariat remains to be recruited. Some progress has been made in re-establishing dialogue between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council to enhance the predictability, sustainability and flexibility of financing for African Union-led peace support operations authorized by the Security Council and utilized pursuant to Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.

61. The United Nations continued to support the implementation of the African Union Compliance Framework on Conduct and Discipline and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, including the finalization of the African Union Board of Inquiry policy for AMISOM, to be applied to ATMIS. The African Union-European Union-United Nations project for the enhancement and operationalization of the African Union Compliance and Accountability Framework for Peace Support Operations was signed on 31 December 2021 and will ensure that these operations are planned and conducted to meet international human rights and humanitarian law and conduct and discipline standards, with the protection of civilians at their core. UNOAU subsequently facilitated a series of initiatives and interactions, including between OHCHR and representatives of the Permanent Missions of African States to the African Union and the African Union Military Strategic Support Group, aimed at enhancing common understanding of and commitment by African troop- and police-contributing countries to their obligations in line with international law.

V. Partnership with other regional organizations and arrangements

Regional economic communities and regional mechanisms

62. Regional economic communities and regional mechanisms are the building blocks for Africa's continental integration agenda and the peace and security architecture. In that regard, it is critical to harness the triangular collaboration among the United Nations, the African Union and the regional economic communities and regional mechanisms and strengthen the coordination of initiatives to deliver impactful support where it is needed most.

63. In Eastern Africa, the United Nations collaborated with IGAD and the African Union in efforts to resolve the political situations in Ethiopia, South Sudan and the Sudan. In West Africa, the United Nations and the African Union coordinated joint initiatives with ECOWAS towards a timely return to constitutional order in Burkina Faso, Guinea and Mali.

64. In Central Africa, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region adopted the joint road map for peace in the Central African Republic at its mini-summit in Luanda on 16 September 2021. The road map reinforces the ongoing efforts by the United Nations, the African Union, ECCAS and the European Union in support of the implementation of the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic of February 2019.

65. As part of the subregional ECCAS-led initiative supported by the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa, MONUSCO adopted an inclusive strategy and action plan, jointly developed with the United Nations country team, to support Congolese authorities in fighting hate speech and incitement.

66. OHCHR supported efforts by the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) to strengthen its early warning system and civil society engagement in early warning and conflict prevention through two consultative workshops aimed at sharing experience among the African Union Commission, COMESA and civil society organizations. It also engaged with the Eastern African Standby Force to support the establishment of its early warning system, including through the development of conflict prevention framework and early warning indicators.

VI. Other activities of the United Nations Office to the African Union

67. UNOAU continued to actively facilitate the strengthening of the United Nations-African Union strategic partnership, under the leadership of the Special Representative to the African Union and Head of UNOAU. Its proximity to the African Union and daily interaction with numerous stakeholders, including the Peace and Security Council, the African Union Commission and partners, remained highly valuable to ensuring and facilitating a One UN approach and moving forward the strategic partnership.

68. From 1 to 3 November 2021, the Special Representative participated in the twelfth annual high-level retreat of the Special Representatives of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and Envoys held in Nairobi, under the theme "Improved coordination and harmonization for impactful mediation", at which participants deliberated on the existing mediation efforts in Africa, their suitability

and effectiveness in the context of evolving conflicts in Africa, and shared ideas on strengthening partnerships towards silencing the guns by 2030.

69. From 12 to 15 May 2022, in Debre Zeit, Ethiopia, UNOAU facilitated the induction retreat of the Peace and Security Council's Committee of Experts, following the election of the new members of the Peace and Security Council (2022–2024/2025), who assumed office effective 1 April.

70. UNOAU also continued to pursue strategic engagements to accelerate the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). Under the “She Stands for Peace” initiative, an e-book and podcast series highlighted personal experiences of women's roles and participation in advancing peace and security efforts in Africa, amplifying women's voices, courageous roles and advocacy for the implementation of the African Union flagship initiative to “Silence the Guns in Africa by 2030”.

71. UNOAU also launched the “She Stands for Peace” website¹ on 8 March 2022, including a community of practice, with the support of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Governments of Norway and Sweden, to serve as a repository for useful information and a platform for the exchange of information and good practices for women, peace and security practitioners.

72. The United Nations, working with the Office of the African Union Special Envoy for Women, Peace and Security, supported the organization in November 2021, in virtual format, of the Third Women Leaders Forum and Intergenerational Retreat of the African Women Leaders Network, during which strategies to institutionalize the Network and increase the representation of young women were agreed upon. UNOAU and UN-Women also supported the development of the Network's website and mentorship platform, creating spaces for mentoring young women leaders through intergenerational dialogues.

73. On 16 and 17 December 2021, UNOAU and the Office of the Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa held a two-day virtual training session on gender-responsive conflict analysis and mediation, bringing together more than 50 members of the Network of African Women in Conflict Prevention and Mediation (FemWise-Africa), the African Union and all regional economic communities. The training highlighted the importance of women's inclusion in mediation and emphasized the cost efficiency realized in using a gender-responsive approach to attain sustainable peace.

74. Regarding the engagement of young people, as part of the African Union Youth for Peace Africa Programme, on 23 and 24 September 2021, UNOAU and the African Union Commission jointly conducted a training of trainers workshop for youth leaders. The workshop was focused on the theme “Arts, Culture and Heritage: Levers for Building the Africa We Want”, leveraging the African Union theme for the year 2021, and provided the opportunity to build the skills and expertise to play a meaningful role in finding solutions to conflict on the continent.

75. Throughout 2022, the Special Representative to the African Union held multiple bilateral meetings with several permanent members of the Security Council and of the Peace and Security Council. Between September 2021 and August 2022, UNOAU and other United Nations entities provided, both in virtual and in-person formats, a total of 42 thematic and country-specific briefings to the Peace and Security Council. UNOAU also facilitated seven informal consultations, held in virtual format, between the President of the Security Council and the Chairperson of the Peace and Security Council. In addition, the Special Representative engaged the senior leadership of the African Union Commission, as well as representatives of strategic think tanks, with a view to nurturing a sustained engagement on African peace and security matters.

¹ See <https://www.un.org/shestandsforpeace/>.

76. Regarding harnessing the capacities of think tanks, UNOAU signed a memorandum of understanding with Amani Africa, located in Addis Ababa, aimed at supporting impactful knowledge management, research and analysis capacities to inform policymaking processes of the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council.

VII. Observations and recommendations

77. The Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security has again proved its value during the reporting period as a strong pillar of multilateralism and a catalyst for the ongoing efforts of both organizations to address complex and evolving peace and security challenges in Africa. It serves as the foundation of a structured, systematic and predictable partnership rooted in the shared values of our two organizations. I note the ongoing African Union institutional reform process and look forward to its outcomes, which will further facilitate improved coordination and coherence of interventions between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council and both organizations more generally.

78. The cascading threats and challenges facing our world and the African continent in particular call for a renewed commitment and decisive action in our collective response. Addressing aggravating factors, such as the adverse impact of COVID-19, and the implications of the ongoing armed conflict in Ukraine, which is exacerbating a triple food, energy and financial crisis, is therefore imperative.

79. The frequency and lethality of terrorist attacks requires sustained concerted efforts to address this scourge in Africa. As we seek to mitigate the threat of terrorism, we recognize the need for a global response to tackle the interplay of multidimensional challenges in a comprehensive and integrated manner. Furthermore, our responses must be firmly anchored in the protection and promotion of human rights, gender equality and the rule of law, including through innovative and evidence-based practices. In that context, the United Nations will continue to be a strong supporter of African-led responses and initiatives to counter terrorism and violent extremism.

80. Collective action in conflict prevention, mediation, peacekeeping and peacebuilding remains a strategic priority. At a time when we are witnessing the expanding threat of terrorism and the troubling return of unconstitutional changes of government in the region, it is imperative to adopt more impactful responses to address the compounding effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and food insecurity as well as the governance deficits, including restrictions of human rights and civic space, which may compromise the region's long-term stability and sustainable development. Any such response will require strong political will, commitment and enhanced partnerships at the local, national, regional and international levels if the root causes of today's multifaceted challenges are to be addressed. The independent assessment on security and development in the Sahel region provides an opportunity to consider these trends in the subregion and proffer practical solutions to enable effective response mechanisms and coordination.

81. Addressing good governance challenges will remain a priority in order to nurture just and accountable institutions and ensure quality service delivery. Focus must be placed on conducting elections in an inclusive, transparent and accountable manner to instil public confidence. Furthermore, attention must be paid to strengthening institutions, structures and mechanisms for the promotion of the rule of law, and I again encourage greater collaboration and coordinated action between the United Nations system and the African Union Commission to strengthen justice and accountability systems throughout the continent.

82. The nexus between peace and security and development cannot be overemphasized. This includes implementing gender-responsive interventions, including ensuring the inclusion of women and young people in political and socioeconomic development strategies and processes.

83. Furthermore, we must protect children in armed conflict, and priority must be given to closing data gaps and increasing child protection capacity and dedicated resources, both within the African Union Commission and in African Union peace support operations.

84. The impact of climate change on the African security landscape is clear and present and has exacerbated development and governance vulnerabilities. In that regard, the twenty-seventh Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, due to take place in Egypt from 7 to 18 November 2022, will present a global opportunity to reflect on climate change impacts on and risks for Africa and on the need to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals, in order to promote a just transition, and an equitable access to financing, mitigation and adaptation.

85. There is a need for strategic interventions that protect food systems from trade disruptions and build sustainable, resilient and fair food production and supply chains to improve food and nutrition security for all by 2030. In that regard, the African Union has designated as its theme of the year for 2022, “Strengthening resilience in nutrition and food security on the African continent: Strengthening agro-food systems, health and social protection systems for the acceleration of human, social and economic capital development”.

86. I would like to thank the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, for his continued collaborative and committed approach to the enhanced partnership between our two organizations. I also express my appreciation to the organs of the African Union, African Member States and the regional economic communities and regional mechanisms for their cooperation in addressing challenges to peace and security in Africa.

87. Finally, I would like to sincerely thank both my outgoing Special Representative to the African Union, Hanna Serwaa Tetteh, and her successor Parfait Onanga-Anyanga, for the important role they have played in facilitating synergies between the two organizations during the reporting period.
