BRIEFING ON UN SUPPORT FOR AU PEACEKEEPING

EXPECTED COUNCIL ACTION

The Security Council has scheduled a briefing on 21 June by the head of the new Addis Ababa-based UN Office to the AU, Zachary Muburi-Muita. The office was established in 2010 and is currently close to becoming fully operational. No outcome is expected from this meeting.

BACKGROUND

The briefing had been initially expected to primarily focus on a report from the Secretary-General which was to define the UN Secretariat's strategic vision for UN-AU cooperation in peace and security. This report is now overdue. The Council in its 22 October 2010 presidential statement said it looked forward to receiving the report and asked that the report should in particular take into account the lessons learnt from the various experiences of joint undertakings by the two bodies. (The Secretary-General had originally signalled his intention of submitting such a report within six months in his 14 October 2010 report on the "Support to African Union peacekeeping operations authorized by the United Nations".)

The Department of Peacekeeping Operations took the lead in the drafting of the report. But the process has taken much longer than expected. It appears that a decision was made earlier in June to expand the scope and to involve also the Department of Political Affairs in the drafting process which effectively meant that the

Secretariat would miss the scheduled briefing. A new version of the report will now most likely be submitted late in 2011.

The 21 June briefing will now focus instead on the work of the UN Office to the AU (UNOAU). This will be the first time that the Council will be briefed on UNOAU which was set up in 2010.

On 1 July 2010, the General Assembly decided to consolidate and upgrade the UN's interface with the AU by creating UNOAU, to be headed by an Assistant Secretary-General. The Office integrates the various UN peace and security presences in Addis Ababa: the UN Liaison Office, the AU Peacekeeping Support Team, the UN Planning Team for the AU Mission in Somalia and the administrative functions of the Joint Support and Coordination Mechanism of the AU-UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur. Kenyan diplomat Zachary Muburi-Muita (who served as Kenya's Permanent Representative to the UN from 2006 to 2010) was chosen as its head and assumed his post in October. (In March 2011 he was given the title of Special Representative of the Secretary-General.) The office was formally inaugurated on 22 February 2011.

UNOAU's mandate is to support the AU's long-term capacity-building efforts and the operationalisation of the African peace and security architecture (whose components are the AU Peace and Security Council

(PSC), the African Standby Force, the Continental Early Warning System, the Panel of the Wise and the Peace Fund). It provides expert technical advice to the AU in the management of complex operations and has also been providing an improved coordination mechanism for cooperation with African subregional organisations.

UNOAU has also a leading role in the implementation of the remainder of the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the AU. The plan was set out in a 16 November 2006 joint Declaration (A/61/630) by the then Chairperson of the African Commission, Alpha Oumar Konaré, and UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. It was conceived as an evolving strategic framework for UN cooperation with the AU and the regional economic communities. The range of areas covered is quite broad, with peace and security being key throughout and being the main focus in the first phase of the programme's implementation.

Halfway through the 10-year period, it seems that the implementation of the plan has suffered from numerous problems. Chief among them, as acknowledged by the Secretary-General in his 2 February 2011 report on the plan, were the multiplicity of actors on both sides and a lack of strategic vision for the programme, also on both sides. The creation of UNOAU is meant to address some of these problems. The office interfaces regularly with the Departments of Political

Affairs, Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support in New York and their counterparts at the AU headquarters. One of its early impacts has been bringing a degree of clarity into a complex relationship between two bureaucracies.

(For more information about the UN-AU relationship, please see SCR's Special Research Report Working Together for Peace and Security in Africa: The Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council of 10 May 2011.)

KEY ISSUES
A key issue for the Council is the role UNOAU can play to maximise the effectiveness of the cooperation between the UN and the AU in peace and security matters.

A related issue is whether UNOAU can play a role in helping to improve the relationship between the Security Council and the AU PSC and ultimately enhance their respective effectiveness and impact.

UNDERLYING PROBLEMS
The Security Council has had a unique relationship with the AU's PSC as far as the interaction with any other bodies is concerned. The PSC has become the Security Council's most frequent interlocutor and it is also the only other political body members of the Security Council have regularly met with as a whole. The relationship, however, has so far not been entirely smooth and until last month, has largely been focused on procedural rather than substantive matters. The meeting between the two councils on 21 May in Addis Ababa was dominated by substantive issues (Libya, Côte d'Ivoire, Sudan and Somalia) but some of the discussion was quite heated, especially with regards to Libya. (For more information please refer to SCR Update Report Visit of Security Council Delegation to Africa of 3 June 2011.) Considerable effort will be needed on all sides before this relationship will be able to live fully up to its considerable potential.

OPTIONS
One option is for the Council to receive the briefing and for members to make national statements.

A further option could be for the Council to decide, and record in a letter from the president to the Secretary-General, on establishing a regular cycle of briefings by UNOAU, perhaps every six months. Within that option, the Council could subsequently indicate particular areas on which it would like the briefings to be focused, such as the implementation of the 10-year plan, the role of UNOAU in assisting in planning of and follow up to the annual consultations between members of the Security Council and the AU PSC or in the holding of the meetings of the Joint AU-UN Task Force (these meetings between senior officials of the two organisations have started in September 2010 and are expected to be held approximately every six months).

A third option is for the Council to request, in addition, that its ad hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa receives regular updates from UNOAU on developments from the Addis Ababa perspective.

Council and Wider Dynamics
With Africa taking up about three quarters of the Council's time and resources and with the need for various forms of conflict prevention and management assistance in Africa stretching the UN capacity, members appreciate the importance of the relationship with the African continental organisation. But there are considerable differences of opinion regarding the nuts and bolts of this relationship.

African members of the Council tend to stress the position of the AU which is seeking practical, financial and material support from the UN for a number of its activities in peace and security context, in particular for peacekeeping operations authorised by the Security Council. There has also been at times some expectation that the Security Council should defer to the political position of the regional organisation.

The PSC also seems at times to be seeking more parity in the relationship with the Security Council. The Security Council on its part has been consistently reaffirming the Security Council's primary responsibility in the maintenance of international peace and security.

Other Council members seem to have concerns about the tendency to expect the Council to defer to the position of regional organisations. And several worry that regional groupings in some situations have difficulty being impartial and may be part of the problem rather than the solution. The huge complexities of jointly managing a hybrid UN/AU mission in Darfur also lead to concerns that this is not a repeatable precedent. The differences on financial support, especially regarding the approach to Somalia are a further issue. The Council is reluctant to transform the AU operation in Somalia into a UN peacekeeping mission, despite the Africans' repeated calls for such a transformation. (China is the only permanent member of the Council who has consistently favoured enhancing UN financing for AU peacekeeping in general and the operation in Somalia in particular, arguing that increasing the cooperation in this field would decrease the burden on UN peacekeeping.)

UN DOCUMENTS

SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS

- S/RES/1973 (17 March 2011) was a resolution on Libya adopted with ten votes and five abstentions and authorised all necessary measures—excluding an occupation force—to protect civilians in Libya and enforce the arms embargo, imposed a no-fly zone, strengthened the sanctions regime, and established a panel of experts.
- S/RES/1970 (26 February 2011) referred the situation in Libya to the ICC, imposed an arms embargo and targeted sanctions (assets freeze and travel ban).
- S/RES/1964 (22 December 2010) renewed the authorisation of AMISOM until 30 September 2011 and raised its troop level to 12,000.
- S/RES/1935 (30 July 2010) renewed UNAMID.
- S/RES/1744 (20 February 2007) authorised AMISOM.
- S/RES/1769 (31 July 2007) established UNAMID.

PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENTS

- S/PRST/2010/21 (22 October 2010) reaffirmed Council commitment to strengthening its partnership with the AU PSC and requested that the Secretary-General's report on UN support to the AU, expected within six months, contain lessons learnt from joint operations.
- 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.

SECRETARY-GENERAL'S REPORTS

- S/2011/54 (2 February 2011) was the review of the Ten-Year Capacity-Building program for the AU.
- S/2010/514 (14 October 2010) was on support for AU peacekeeping.
- S/2009/470 (18 September 2009) was on support to AU peace-keeping operations authorised by the UN.
- S/2008/186 (7 April 2008) was on the relationship between the UN and regional organisations.

LETTERS

- S/2011/319 (18 May 2011) contained the terms of reference for the 19-26 May 2011 mission to Africa.
- S/2010/434 (13 August 2010) was from the president of the Security Council to the Secretary-General and took note of the appointment of Zachary Muburi-Muita as the Head of the UN Office to the AU.
- S/2010/433 (6 August 2010) was from the Secretary-General to the president of the Security Council outlining the creation of the UN Office to the AU.
- S/2008/813 (24 December 2008) was from the Secretary-General forwarding the AU-UN panel report (the Prodi report) on how to support AU peacekeeping operations established under UN mandate to the Security Council and General Assembly.

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

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

MEETING RECORDS

- S/PV.6546 (6 June 2011) was a briefing on the 19-26 May the Council visit to Africa by the leaders of the different segments of the trip.
- S/PV.6409 (22 October 2010) was an open debate at which the Secretary-General's report on assistance to AU peacekeeping operations was discussed.
- S/PV.6206 (26 October 2009) was a debate on the report of the AU-UN panel which covered modalities for support to AU peacekeeping operations.
- S/PV.6092 and Res. 1 (18 March 2009) was the debate on the AU-UN Panel's report on modalities for support to AU operations.
- S/PV.5735 and Res. 1 (28 August 2007) was the discussion on the role of the Security Council in conflict prevention and resolution,

in particular in Africa.
- S/PV.5649 (28 March 2007) was a Council debate under the South African presidency on relations between the UN and regional organisations, particularly the AU.
- S/PV.5448 (31 May 2006) was a briefing by the Chairman of the AU.

OTHER

- A/61/630 (11 December 2006) was the joint declaration on the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the AU.