



Joint Communiqué: The United Nations-African Union Joint Task Force on Peace and Security Holds its Twenty Third Consultative Meeting

New York, 16 April— The United Nations-African Union Joint Task Force on Peace and Security held its twenty third consultative meeting on 16 April, in New York.

The meeting reviewed the status of the partnership between the United Nations (UN) and the African Union (AU), with an update on the implementation of the Joint UN-AU Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security. In this context, the meeting discussed peace and security developments in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Libya, Mozambique, Somalia, the Sudan and South Sudan, as well as West Africa and the Sahel region. The meeting also discussed the way forward following the adoption of Security Council Resolution 2719 (2023) on financing of African Union-led peace support operations.

The AU Commission and the UN Secretariat were represented by AU Commissioner Bankole Adeoye (Political Affairs, Peace and Security); and the Under-Secretaries-General Rosemary DiCarlo (Political and Peacebuilding Affairs), Jean-Pierre Lacroix (Peace Operations), Parfait Onanga-Anyanga (Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the African Union), and Assistant Secretaries-General Martha Pobe (Africa) and Lisa Bittenheim (Operational Support). The meeting was also attended by other senior officials from the two Organizations.

The Joint Task Force took note of the considerable progress achieved in the UN-AU partnership, including with Regional Economic Communities and Mechanisms in Africa, together with international partners. These include sustained collaboration on support to AU peace support operations, early warning, prevention initiatives and coordinated support to national authorities for the conduct of timely, peaceful, and inclusive elections, as well as for the promotion and protection of human rights. The meeting discussed the need for sustainable financing of Security Council-mandated AU-led peace support operations.

The meeting highlighted the challenges facing West Africa and the Sahel countries, including the persistent threat of terrorism, and the need for the international community to strengthen support for these countries to avoid spillover to other countries. The meeting discussed the revitalization of the Joint Sahel Assessment on Security, Governance, and Development and, in this regard, emphasized the importance of streamlining the security, humanitarian, and development requirements in every initiative by the international community in the region. The meeting also agreed that the adoption of Security Council resolution 2719 (2023) was a positive development in UN-AU support for the fight against terrorism through the provision of predictable and sustainable support to African Union-led peace support operations. The meeting agreed to hold technical-level discussions in Addis Ababa by 25 May, and a follow up meeting around 17-20 June if required, to agree on the next steps for the operationalization of this milestone resolution, including modalities for its implementation.

Concerning the Central African Republic, the Joint Task Force commended the progress achieved in the advancement of the peace process, and welcomed the Central African Government's continued ownership and commitment to pursue the implementation of the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic, and the Joint Road Map for Peace in the Central African Republic of the



International Conference on the Great Lakes Region. The Joint Task Force, however, noted that these gains remain fragile, pointing to the deterioration of the security situation at the border areas and transhumance zones that continue to pose threats to civilians. To this end, the Joint Task Force reiterated the importance of concerted regional efforts to address the persistent insecurity in the Central African Republic. The Joint Task Force highlighted that the long awaited local elections provide an essential opportunity to strengthen local governance and decentralize the peace process, and called on regional and international partners' support to this important process. The meeting took note of the appointment of the new Special Representative of the Chairperson of the AU Commission and Head of the AU Mission for Central and Eastern Africa (MISAC), António Egídio de Sousa Santos, who has already assumed office.

Regarding the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the Joint Task Force expressed serious concerns over the continued deterioration of the security situation in eastern DRC and urged all armed groups to lay down weapons and disarm unconditionally. The Joint Task Force encouraged countries of the region to work towards peace and avoid any action that would undermine the stability, sovereignty and territorial integrity of their neighbours. The meeting commended efforts spearheaded by H.E. João Lourenço, President of Angola and African Union Champion for Peace and Reconciliation, for his efforts to de-escalate tensions and normalize relations between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda under the Luanda roadmap. The Joint Task Force welcomed the deployment of the Southern African Development Community Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (SAMIDRC) and the endorsement, on 4 March, of the regional force by the African Union Peace and Security Council. The Joint Task Force agreed to continue working towards the harmonization and coordination of regional initiatives for peace and stability in eastern DRC.

On Libya, the Joint Task Force expressed concern over the stalled political process and highlighted the importance of UN-AU cooperation in support of Libyan efforts to lead the country towards elections. Participants underscored the importance of a unified and coordinated approach by all international partners for the advancement of the political process in Libya. The meeting welcomed the African Union's continued commitment to supporting the national reconciliation process in Libya, including through the organization of the National Reconciliation Conference, in collaboration with the Presidential Council, in order to uphold a rights-based approach to reconciliation that is rooted in the principles of transitional justice and includes all Libyans.

The Joint Task Force welcomed progress in the implementation of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement in Ethiopia. The meeting highlighted the importance of establishing inclusive dialogue processes to address insecurity and underscored the commitment of the AU and UN to accompany Ethiopia in building sustainable peace.

Regarding Somalia, the meeting noted that cooperation between the AU and the UN in Somalia remains strong towards ensuring Somalia is better supported to advance its key national priorities, including the ongoing security transition. Participants expressed concern about the financial gaps of ATMIS, which need to be addressed by the international community. The meeting stressed the imperative for international partners to ensure a predictable and sustainable financing mechanism for any follow-on AU presence while equally investing in the capacities of the Somalia Security Forces to assume security responsibilities.



Echoing Security Council Resolution 2724 (2024), the Joint Task Force called on the warring parties in the Sudan to ensure an immediate cessation of hostilities and to take genuine and concrete steps towards a sustainable resolution of the conflict through dialogue. The Joint Task Force called for continued efforts to enhance coordination of the existing diplomatic initiatives to put an end to the conflict and to restore a lasting, inclusive civilian-led democratic transition in the Sudan.

Regarding South Sudan, the meeting exchanged on UN and AU respective discussions with South Sudanese stakeholders on the state of the transition and the progress towards the holding of the first elections since the independence of South Sudan, scheduled to take place this year. The meeting underlined the need to continue to work with international partners and regional actors including IGAD through the Trilateral Mechanisms to encourage South Sudanese stakeholders to overcome key obstacles on the various transitional processes; and accelerate preparatory work for the timely holding of peaceful and inclusive elections which will pave the way for the end of the transition as envisioned in the 2018 Revitalised Agreement to the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan.

The next statutory meeting of the Joint Task Force will be convened by both Organizations at a date to be mutually agreed.