

## Policy Dialogue

Jointly organized by Amani Africa and UNOAU

### **‘Towards a Renewed AU-UN Partnership: Financing of African Union Led Peace Support Operations’**

On 29 April 2023, the Secretary General (SG) of the United Nations (UN) released the report on the implementation of Security Council (SC) Resolutions 2320 and 2378 and considerations related to the financing of African Union Peace Support Operations mandated by the SC. Together the African Union (AU) Consensus Paper adopted during the February 2023 AU Summit, this report of the SG establishes the basis for the resumption of the negotiation in the UNSC for the adoption of a framework resolution on financing of AU peace support operations authorised by the UNSC through assessed contributions of the UN.

This process has been underway almost since the establishment of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), which was put in place under the Protocol establishing the Peace and Security Council (PSC). The APSA not only forms part of the global collective security system as envisaged in Article 17 of the PSC Protocol but is also a most potent instrument in the service of the global public good of maintaining international peace and security. Since its establishment, it contributed to international peace and security and carried the burden of the UNSC in the delivery of international peace and security through most notably the department of peace support operations in conditions where the UN is unable or unwilling to do so.

While there is consensus on the critical contributions of AU PSOs to international peace and security, the financing of these operations has been a major perennial challenge that to the effective use of AU PSOs in pursuit of international peace and security. At the same time, despite the widespread recognition including in UNSC Resolutions (for example Res 2320) on the need for predictable, adequate and sustainable funding of AU PSOs, the call for the UN assessed contributions as the key avenue for achieving this on a case by case basis, as proposed by the High Level Panel on Peace Operations, progress on this front has until recently been slow. The efforts were led by the African three (A3) members of the UNSC both individually and collectively in 2018 and in 2019 but collapsed. Since then, the process has been stalled.

In order to provide a more strategic guidance and political direction the AU adopted the ‘African Consensus Paper on Predictable, Adequate and Sustainable Financing for AU Peace and Security Activities’ at the 36<sup>th</sup> AU Summit in February 2023. Through the adoption of the consensus paper the AU has signaled to the A3 to resume the negotiation process. Under the coordinating role of Ghana, A3 members will be working towards the development of a framework resolution.

The Secretary General report on the issue released on 29 April 2023 has added further political weight and impetus to this longstanding matter which has featured frequently in AU’s engagement with the UN. The Secretary General has expressed so many times his support to Africa’s call on the need for sustainable and predictable funding in order to effectively respond to the severe security challenges that the continent is facing. Particularly with increased threat and spread of terrorism in the continent, the Secretary General indicated the added value of AU led PSOs in advancing international peace and security.

Considering the increasing significance of the AU as a major voting block in the UN for injecting a much needed source of support to the multilateral system that is under enormous pressure and dysfunction, it has become ever more pressing to achieve consensus on a case by case financing of AU PSOs using UN assessed contributions. This is one critical pathway for the New Agenda for Peace to also strengthen the AU as a key pillar of multilateralism in this era.

This requires both higher level of commitment for making the necessary compromise and closer working relationship with the A3, the wider African Group to avoid the frustrations of 2018/2019. The AU-UN partnership is at a pivotal point in charting an agreed upon framework to provide sustainable and predictable funding for PSOs. The negotiation process also requires a strong coordination and sustained consultation between Addis and New York. The policy dialogue aims at presenting and examining key policy issues that are emerging both from Addis and New York and it aims at contributing in bridging the policy discourse between the two spaces. It will be a timely exchange taking place ahead of the PSC ministerial meeting on financing of AU PSOs under Uganda's chairship and during the month in which the Secretary General is scheduled to present his report to the UNSC.

Date: Wednesday 10, 2023