



# Security Council

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## Report of the Secretary-General on options for authorization and support for African Union peace support operations

### I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution [2320 \(2016\)](#) of 18 November 2016 in which the Council, inter alia, requested me to continue working closely with the African Union to refine options for further cooperation on the relevant African Union proposals, including on financing, accountability, joint planning and the process for mandating African Union peace support operations, subject to authorization by the Security Council; and to provide the Security Council with a detailed report within six months. This report builds on the findings of the joint African Union-United Nations review of available mechanisms to finance and support African Union peace operations authorized by the Security Council ([A/71/410-S/2016/809](#)).

### II. Context

2. The joint review noted that the African Union-United Nations partnership on peace operations has continued to evolve and innovate in the past 15 years, and has become essential to respond to common challenges posed by armed conflicts in Africa. Peace support operations are a key tool on which the international community increasingly relies to address challenges to peace and security in Africa, in large part because of the demonstrated ability and willingness of the African Union to deploy rapidly and its doctrinal flexibility, allowing it to deploy missions in particularly challenging environments with robust mandated tasks, including peace enforcement and counter-terrorism.

3. The joint review noted that the African Union's willingness to deploy and respond to challenging situations through the deployment of peace support operations has been undermined by a lack of capacity in key areas, particularly staffing, logistics and some key military capabilities. All African Union missions have relied to some extent on external partners for support. The joint review made clear that the African Union must continue to build its capacity to plan, finance, sustain and oversee its own missions so that it can implement its mandates, meet the expectations of its membership and partners, and enhance the partnership with the United Nations. Furthermore, the joint review recognized the need for African Union peace support operations to have predictable and sustainable financing and support.



4. Since the publication of the joint review, significant strides towards furthering the partnership have been made. At the African Union summit in January 2017, I committed to strengthening the partnership on political issues and peace operations, with stronger mutual support and continued technical assistance. On 19 April, the new Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, and I convened the first United Nations-African Union Annual Conference at United Nations Headquarters. The Conference, convened at the highest levels of the two secretariats, illustrated the new chapter of the strategic partnership between the two organizations. Further, the Conference confirmed our commitment to strengthen dialogue, enhance existing mechanisms for coordination and cooperation and continue to forge a common vision in line with our priorities. During the Conference, the Chairperson and I endorsed and co-signed the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for an Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security. It provides for a strategic approach between the two organizations to address challenges to peace and security across the full spectrum of the conflict cycle. At the technical level, joint work was undertaken over the past six months to explore different modalities for future support of the United Nations to African Union peace support operations pursuant to Security Council resolution [2320 \(2016\)](#).

5. In the meantime, the United Nations peace and security architecture continues to evolve. It is increasingly clear that more must be done to prevent conflicts from spiralling out of control and that dialogue with regional and subregional partners is a key aspect of this agenda. It is also clear that United Nations peacekeeping operations are too often deployed in places where there is no peace to keep and where they are subject to hostility and lack of cooperation from host governments as well as terrorist threats. Partnership with regional and subregional organizations to determine the right and timely responses is imperative to ensuring our effectiveness, as is ensuring that our systems for the management and administration of our operations are fit for purpose.

### **III. Joint planning and mandating of African Union peace support operations authorized by the Security Council**

6. Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations and its three Articles (52 to 54) define the primacy of the Security Council vis-à-vis regional and subregional organizations and the complementary and subsidiary nature of the latter. The Charter provides the Security Council with the oversight role of activities undertaken under regional arrangements or by regional agencies for the maintenance of international peace and security. Article 54 provides that regional organizations shall keep the Council fully informed of these activities.

7. The report of August 2016 of the High Representative for the African Union Peace Fund entitled “Securing Predictable and Sustainable Financing for Peace in Africa” proposed a process for authorizing African Union peace support operations by the Security Council for which support through assessed contributions was sought. The proposals of the High Representative for financial support by the United Nations, along with existing United Nations system-wide policy frameworks such as the United Nations integrated assessment and planning policy and internal United Nations guidelines of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support, particularly the peacekeeping planning policy, were used to develop a general framework for the joint planning, mandating and oversight of African Union peace support operations by the United Nations and the African Union. The resulting joint process outlined below is envisaged for, but not necessarily limited to, situations in which the African Union might seek financial

support from the United Nations for the deployment of an African Union peace support operation. Some underlying guiding principles are presented below to frame the presentation of the key phases and decision points related to a proposed generic planning, mandating and oversight process of such applicable African Union peace support operations.

### **Guiding principles for joint planning and mandating**

8. A key consideration for a joint process is preserving the African Union's ability to respond rapidly and its doctrinal flexibility. This may require, in some cases, that technical aspects of the process are accelerated to the extent possible when compared to the typical time frames for the planning of new United Nations peacekeeping operations. The ultimate goal for the United Nations and the African Union should be to jointly identify and support the best approaches to resolve or respond to crises on the basis of a common assessment rather than replicating the existing processes for planning United Nations peacekeeping operations or African Union peace support operations.

9. While the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council should consult closely on peace and security challenges in Africa, it should be acknowledged that the two organizations have separate and distinct decision-making processes and governance structures, which should be respected. As the primary organ for maintaining international peace and security, the Security Council must be fully confident in a predictable decision-making process when it is requested to authorize African Union peace support operations for which financial assistance will be sought through assessments upon Member States, to be approved by the General Assembly. This process is therefore intended to allow for sufficient and reliable information to be provided to both Councils in a predictable and transparent manner to support informed decision-making and to form the basis of my proposals to the Security Council and the General Assembly, with due consideration for the need to respond rapidly owing to the urgency of the situation.

10. A standardized joint planning and mandating process alone, however, is not sufficient to ensure an effective joint decision-making framework; such a framework must be underpinned by enhanced cooperation between the two organizations. The earlier the United Nations and the African Union engage, the likelier it is for the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council to develop a common understanding of a situation which would form the basis for decision-making. Informal and active consultations would also help to address issues related to resources and mandate definition thereby avoiding any delay in responding to the crisis.

11. An effective joint planning process, followed by an ongoing joint review process, should apply throughout the duration of a peace support operation, to ensure that staffs of both the African Union and the United Nations have a commonly agreed and shared understanding of steps, tools and expected outcomes of the process. The organizations should ensure the development of technical expertise and promote knowledge exchange in key areas, which would serve as a basis for the joint planning and coordinated follow-up process. In parallel, a commonly agreed costing methodology for African Union peace support operations should be developed to ensure that credible estimates of financial implications can accompany options presented for consideration by the Security Council.

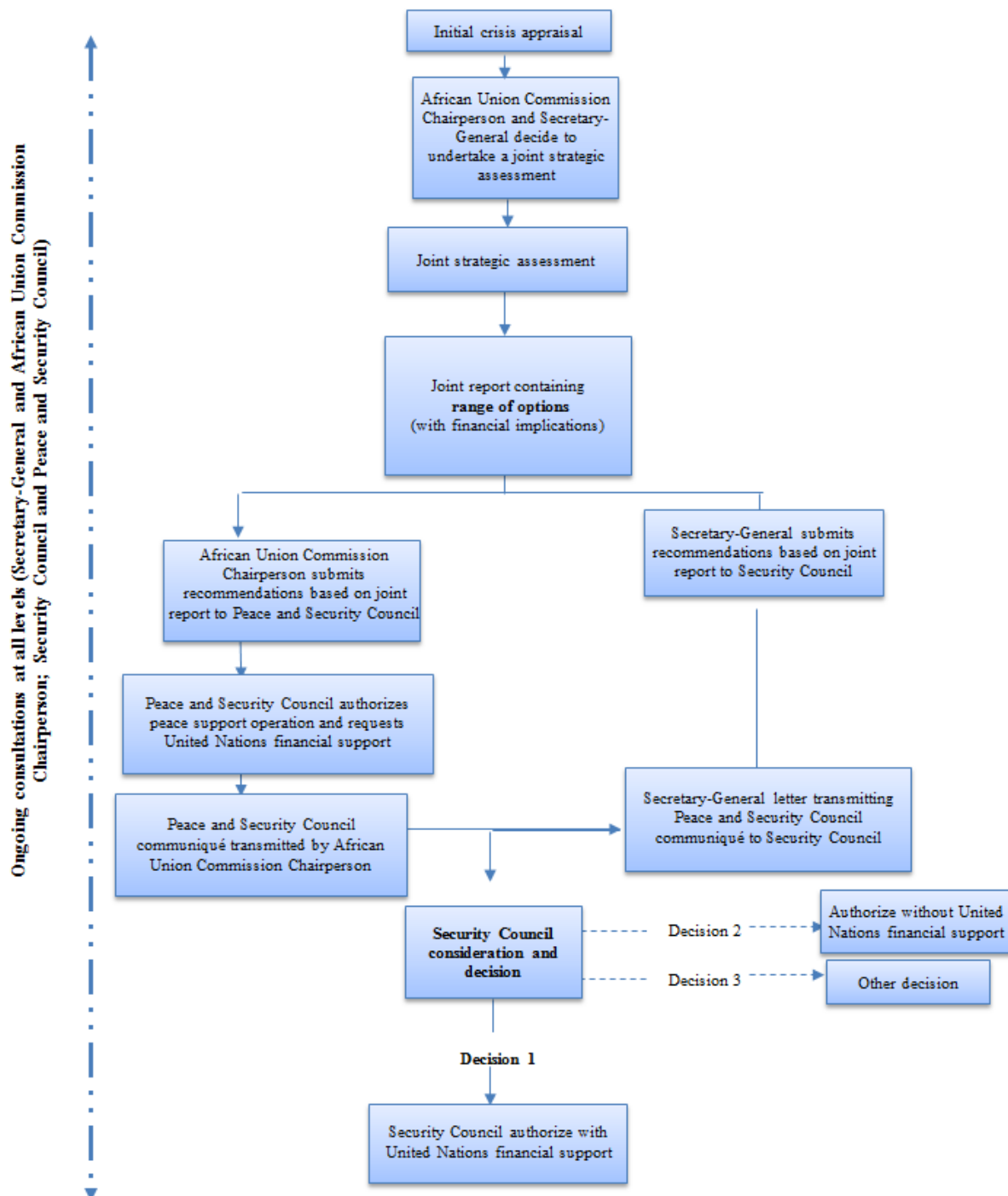
12. Reporting on mandate implementation will also be a key element in the lifespan of peace support operations authorized under the proposed framework. The Chairperson of the African Union Commission will be expected to provide regular reports to both the Peace and Security Council and the Security Council. A reporting

framework should therefore be developed and jointly agreed. This would establish clear, consistent and predictable reporting channels between the Secretariat, the Commission and the two Councils, as well as standardize reporting requirements depending on the type of reporting, including for general updates, joint assessment findings, and reporting on financial and human rights compliance.

**Proposed consultative planning and mandating process**

13. The following flow charts (figures I and II) provide a summary of the proposed joint United Nations-African Union planning and decision-making process:

Figure I  
**Consultative United Nations-African Union planning and decision-making process: from initial appraisal to authorization**



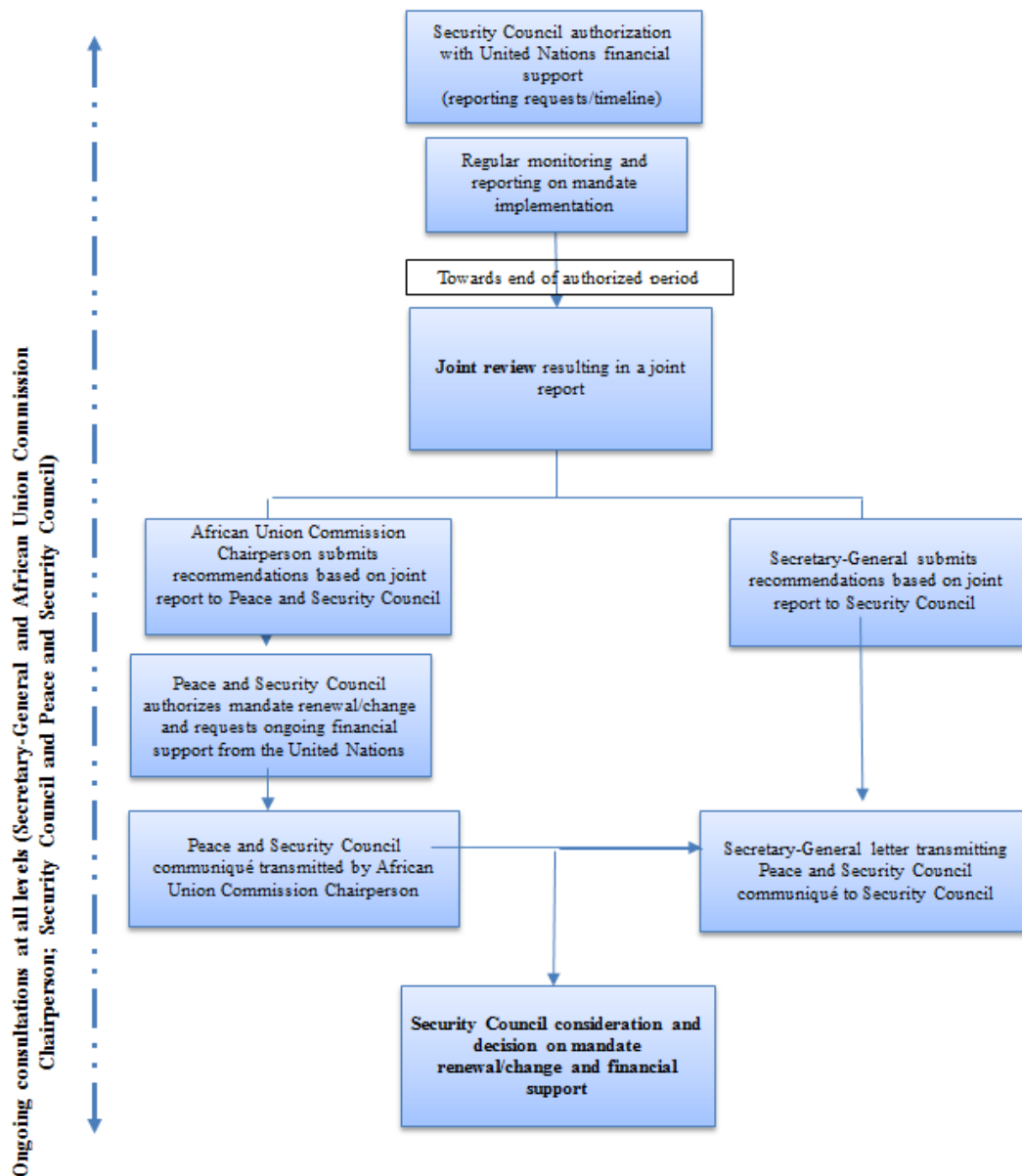
14. The different steps of the standard proposed process are summarized below. As a matter of principle, the jointness will be sustained throughout the process, including through my regular consultations with the Chairperson of the African Union Commission.

15. **Initial crisis appraisal.** Both organizations have internal processes for assessing and responding when a crisis emerges or an existing crisis worsens within the African continent. To the extent that they consider it necessary to start assessing the conditions on the ground and intervention options, including the possible deployment of a peace support operation, the African Union Commission and the United Nations Secretariat will activate their own early warning mechanisms and internal analysis in accordance with usual practice. Following this initial crisis appraisal, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission may officially reach out to me to communicate the African Union's intention to conduct a strategic assessment of the situation on the ground. This assessment will recommend a broad range of options to address the situation, including through the possible deployment of an African Union peace support operation for which United Nations support may be required. The Chairperson will then invite the United Nations to participate in what would become a joint strategic assessment of the situation. The Chairperson may do so at his or her own initiative or at the request of the Peace and Security Council.

16. **Joint strategic assessment.** If agreement is reached to undertake a joint strategic assessment, a joint United Nations-African Union team will be constituted, led jointly by the African Union Commission and the United Nations Secretariat. The team could include other stakeholders, such as African Union regional mechanisms for conflict prevention, management and resolution and Member States, as appropriate. The joint assessment should be understood as a flexible tool which can be adapted depending on the urgency of the situation and the availability of pre-existing analysis. However, it should contain a detailed conflict analysis and a range of options for response by the two Councils, identifying distinct roles for the African Union, the United Nations and other actors. The joint team should ensure that political solutions guide any option to deploy a peace support operation. Each option should include the estimated financial and support implications for both organizations as well as any other information required for both Councils to make informed decisions. The joint strategic assessment report will be submitted separately by the African Union Commission Chairperson and myself to the Peace and Security Council and the Security Council, respectively.

17. **Mandating.** Informal consultations between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council should be encouraged throughout the process to find common ground on resource requirements and mandate definition before any formal decision is taken by either Council. Such exchanges could occur at the discretion of both Councils and in a format to be jointly agreed. If the Peace and Security Council eventually decides that an African Union peace support operation represents the best option for response under the prevailing circumstances and determines that United Nations support may be required, it may invite the African Union Commission Chairperson to transmit a letter to me to inform the Security Council of its decision. The Security Council will subsequently consider the African Union's request and the joint strategic assessment report, as well as any other relevant documents it may have requested from me, and provide an appropriate response.

Figure II  
**Consultative United Nations-African Union planning and decision-making process: from authorization to mandate renewal**



18. **Mission start-up.** Once an African Union peace support operation has been mandated, the United Nations Secretariat and the African Union Commission will jointly develop the detailed planning documents, such as the mission and component-level concepts, and secure the appropriate approvals. The United Nations-African Union planning team will continue to develop and finalize methodologies and templates to this end. Clear benchmarks for an African Union exit strategy and possible subsequent role of the United Nations should be established at the earliest stages in the planning of the mission and these benchmarks should be kept under regular joint review.

19. The African Union will develop policies and processes to ensure that international humanitarian law, international human rights law and a conduct and discipline compliance framework are integrated in all aspects of mission operations,

including planning, force generation and police selection and recruitment (including verification and screening), predeployment training, conduct of operations and monitoring and reporting procedures. The United Nations requires that support to all non-United Nations entities be provided in compliance with the human rights due diligence policy on United Nations support provided to non-United Nations security forces. Therefore a United Nations capacity will likely be needed to ensure that the United Nations can undertake activities required under the due diligence policy, including risk assessment, support to the implementation of mitigation measures and establishment of mechanisms to prevent, monitor, report on and address violations of international humanitarian, human rights and refugee law. These compliance tasks could be undertaken by a new or pre-existing civilian presence already in the mission area or in a neighbouring country, depending on the nature of the conflict and the environment.

20. The African Union and the United Nations will appoint their respective senior mission leadership teams, in line with international humanitarian and human rights law and conduct and discipline compliance requirements.

21. **General reporting to the Councils.** The African Union Commission Chairperson and I would provide regular joint reports to the Peace and Security Council and the Security Council on the implementation of the mission's mandate, as defined by the two Councils. I may provide additional reporting as required through briefings to the Security Council.

22. **Joint assessments.** The Security Council will be requested to authorize a peace support operation and related support through the United Nations for a specific period and with a specific mandate. The extension of the mandate and support will require appropriate consideration by the Council. Accordingly, it will be important for the African Union Commission and the United Nations Secretariat to continue to undertake joint assessments, including joint evaluations and joint benchmarking exercises, throughout the duration of the mandate of the peace support operation, in order to review its impact on the ground and measure its performance against benchmarks or targets. Both will then inform the Peace and Security Council and the Security Council on the progress made by the mission, and make joint recommendations for adjustments in the mandate or support provided to the mission. Towards the end of the authorized period, joint reviews will be conducted in order to discuss mandate renewals and exit strategies, and will follow a similar decision-making process as for the initial mandating.

23. **Accountability and compliance.** The reports of the African Union Commission Chairperson to the Peace and Security Council and the Security Council will include updates on accountability, including issues pertaining to international humanitarian and human rights law as well as compliance with standards of conduct pertaining to military, police and civilian personnel in the mission. All allegations of violations, whether of international humanitarian and human rights law or misconduct, would be investigated and a report submitted on an annual basis to the Peace and Security Council and the Security Council on the actions taken by the African Union and its troop- and police-contributing countries.

24. **Transparency and access to information.** As part of the enhancement of the partnership, the African Union Commission would ensure, on the basis of agreed modalities, that access is provided to its planning, management and oversight processes, where appropriate.

25. **Financial reporting and audit.** The African Union Commission would provide access to United Nations oversight mechanisms on the basis of agreed modalities. If a peace support operation is financed at least in part through United Nations assessed contributions, sufficient information must be provided to the



United Nations Secretariat to enable my requisite reports containing proposals for appropriation of resources and subsequent performance reports to be submitted for consideration by the General Assembly. Any use of assessed contributions would be considered by the General Assembly, through the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Fifth Committee, through the normal budget process. The United Nations will support the African Union to reinforce its monitoring and reporting policies in order to provide the required budgeting, financial and performance reports to the General Assembly.

## **IV. Financing of peace support operations**

### **A. Considerations with regard to financial support to peace support operations**

26. The United Nations and Member States could provide financial support to an African Union peace support operation through a number of different financing models, including voluntary contributions through a United Nations-managed trust fund; a subvention in exceptional emergency situations; joint financing of a jointly developed budget; establishment of a United Nations support office; or joint financing of a hybrid mission. Each financing arrangement has potential benefits, and no one model is appropriate for every situation. Different models may be more appropriate for different peace support operations, as determined by factors such as the size, character, expected duration and the nature of mandated tasks of the operation; the respective capabilities of the African Union Commission, troop- and police-contributing countries and external partners; and the results of human rights risk assessments. Each option developed as a result of the joint strategic assessment would be accompanied by a recommended financing model, which would in turn determine the role to be played by United Nations legislative bodies. It is expected that the Security Council would indicate the financing model to apply when authorizing a mission under the joint process outlined above.

27. A number of assumptions underpin the various financing models. First, these models assume that peace support operations will receive funding from the African Union Peace Fund in addition to any financial support from the United Nations. Second, the types of costs covered by the financial resources of the United Nations through assessed contributions on Member States for peace support operations would generally be in line with those usually incurred by United Nations peacekeeping operations; for example, the acquisition of contingent-owned equipment would remain a national responsibility and would not be financed by the United Nations. In all of the models, some form of mandated United Nations presence would be necessary to undertake tasks in areas such as planning, reporting and accountability, including those required for implementation of the human rights due diligence policy. Where a support office or hybrid mission is authorized, this capacity can be included in the structure. Finally, different models could be applied at different phases of an operation.

28. Although the types of costs covered would be similar to those of United Nations peacekeeping, the rates and structures of reimbursement used by the United Nations are based on costs, planning assumptions and operational requirements that are different from those applicable to African Union peace support operations. Even contingents deployed to United Nations peacekeeping missions with more robust requirements have experienced difficulties in fulfilling provisions under the existing United Nations contingent-owned equipment system, as evidenced by the discussions during the 2017 session of the Working Group on Contingent-Owned Equipment (see [A/C.5/71/20](#)). In Somalia, the United Nations contingent-owned

equipment system has struggled to meet the requirements of contingents deployed to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) engaged in combat operations. On average, the equipment deployed by AMISOM contingents is subject to greater wear and tear and has a much higher likelihood of loss or damage due to hostile action than that deployed to United Nations peacekeeping missions. It follows, therefore, that the African Union should develop personnel and contingent-owned equipment reimbursement systems applicable for its peace support operations.

29. Financing of reimbursements to African Union troop- and police-contributing countries under rates developed for African Union peace support operations can either remain the responsibility of the African Union or be shared between the African Union and the United Nations. However, before such reimbursement can be financed through United Nations assessed contributions, the rates of reimbursement must be approved by the General Assembly. The General Assembly should also consider the human rights due diligence policy-related implications of the payment of reimbursement through assessed contributions.

## **B. Financing models**

30. The Security Council has, in the past, requested the establishment of trust funds through which to support African Union peace support operations through voluntary contributions. As noted in the report of the joint review, trust funds have been a flexible means of meeting targeted requirements, particularly when used to supplement other types of support (A/71/410-S/2016/809, para. 59). However, past experience has demonstrated that trust funds do not provide an adequate, predictable or sustainable source of funding. A trust fund should therefore not be the primary source of financing for a peace support operation but would supplement funding from the African Union Peace Fund and other sources of funding.

31. The Security Council could also consider a number of potential financing models through which assessed contributions could be used to support a peace support operation, as illustrated below.

### **Subvention**

32. Requirements for an African Union deployment, in exceptional or emergency circumstances where shortfalls in available resources from the Peace Fund and other sources of funding are experienced, could potentially be financed through a subvention by the United Nations. Subventions have previously been used to meet urgent requirements of non-United Nations organizations, although none have been for field operations. Requests for subventions must be fully justified, but are not required to be as detailed as formal budget proposals for appropriation and can be prepared more quickly.

33. In previous cases, an organization would identify the shortfall in available funding against its planned resource requirements, which would give rise to a request for a subvention from the United Nations. Likewise, the African Union Commission would first determine the amount of funding shortfall required from the United Nations and make a formal request to me for a subvention. I would inform the Security Council of the request through an exchange of letters and subsequently transmit the request to the General Assembly for approval. A subvention, which is sought in exceptional or emergency circumstances, can provide resources only for a single budget period. Furthermore, the General Assembly requires reports on how funds provided through a subvention were utilized. All subventions require the approval of the General Assembly and, because they are facilitated by an authority to enter into commitments as opposed to an

appropriation, they have a cash flow impact upon the United Nations and would require a working capital reserve, such as the Peacekeeping Reserve Fund.

#### **Joint financing of a jointly developed budget**

34. Another option for the financing of an African Union peace support operation is a formal budget financed partially through United Nations assessed contributions but managed by the African Union. Budget estimates could be developed jointly by the United Nations Secretariat and the African Union Commission. The resulting joint budget submission would be used as the basis for my budget report presented to the General Assembly for its consideration and approval. The appropriation of the United Nations share of the approved budget would be apportioned among its Member States on the basis of the appropriate scale of assessments, while the African Union share of the approved budget would be charged to the African Union Peace Fund.

35. This financing model has not previously been used in a peace operation or field context and efforts would be required before the two organizations would be in a position to operationalize this model, including agreement on a joint budget estimation process with agreed planning assumptions and methodologies for defining costs for my budgetary submission, expenditure monitoring and budget performance reporting, oversight and audit arrangements and financial reporting requirements. Development of these processes, as well as the structures required to implement them, would further enhance the capacity of the African Union Commission to effectively and accountably manage its peace support operations in the future.

#### **United Nations support office**

36. A fourth option is for the Security Council to authorize the establishment of a United Nations support office financed through assessed contributions, to undertake specific tasks determined by the Security Council to support an African Union peace support operation. This model has been used in Somalia since 2009 to support AMISOM, through the United Nations Support Office for AMISOM (UNSOA) and the United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS). The specific tasks delivered would be specified by the Security Council and should be determined on the basis of a comparative advantage exercise and an assessment of other sources of external financial and in-kind support to the African Union. The deployment of United Nations enabling units to support an African Union mission experiencing challenges generating such capabilities could be envisaged through a support office arrangement. As with UNSOA and UNSOS, United Nations assessed contributions would be used only to finance the United Nations support office and its activities. This model has the benefit of clear accountability for the management of United Nations resources but requires strong coordination at all levels to ensure the overall coherence of the combined operations. However, the AMISOM experience has shown the limitations of the support office model in effectively supporting highly kinetic combat missions.

#### **Joint financing of a hybrid mission**

37. The final option envisages the joint financing of a United Nations-African Union hybrid mission managed by the United Nations, but for which the African Union bears a portion of the costs in line with its commitment to meet some of the financial requirements of its own peace support operations. Hybrid missions benefit from the consolidation of military and political efforts from both organizations into a single structure in support of a peace process and also provide a peace support operation with the full spectrum of support available to United Nations

peacekeeping operations, including backstopping support from Headquarters and access to strategic deployment stocks and the Peacekeeping Reserve Fund. The establishment of a mission as a hybrid mission may also be necessary for political reasons. However, a hybrid mission may not be appropriate for all operations, including those focused on combat operations. Costs for hybrid missions could be apportioned between the two organizations.

## **V. Mission support considerations**

38. The Security Council has repeatedly stressed the importance of partnership between the United Nations and African Union and of this being underpinned by principles such as comparative advantage, burden-sharing, jointness, transparency and accountability. These principles also apply to mission support.

39. Comparative advantage is the ability of an actor to undertake an activity at a lower opportunity cost than other actors. Opportunity cost should be considered in the broadest sense, including political, security and financial considerations. In the integrated assessment and planning process used in the United Nations, these assessments consider each actor's legal mandate, demonstrated capacity and ability to provide a unique contribution in the selected area. Comparative advantage assessments are context-specific and comparative advantages are, by definition, relative. In the context of partnerships with regional organizations, comparative advantages may be identified during a strategic assessment, separate technical surveys and during the course of a joint planning process.

40. While the United Nations has, over several decades, developed extensive experience, expertise, capacity and processes in the area of mission support and related tasks, this does not always translate into a comparative advantage for all support tasks. Moreover, comparative advantages may evolve over time or be determined by unique circumstances in a particular context. For example, should the United Nations be required to develop entirely different processes and systems to undertake a support task in a different manner and under different conditions than in United Nations missions, it may be more effective for another actor to deliver that form of support.

41. Transfer of tasks from one actor to another may take place upon start-up, during the sustainment phase, or during or in anticipation of a transition. As the African Union develops its internal capacities, including the continental logistics base and acquisition capacity, it is most likely that it will gain the comparative advantage for additional support responsibilities.

### **Flexible model for mission support**

42. Several mission support models have, in the past, been used to support missions mandated or authorized by the African Union. The support package model which has evolved over time to support AMISOM represents the most comprehensive arrangement involving multiple actors, namely the United Nations, the African Union, troop- and police-contributing countries, and subregional and other partners including the European Union. In other recent African Union peace support operations in Mali and the Central African Republic, the United Nations provided support through management of a multi-partner trust fund, but had a limited role in mission support to the forces prior to the transition of those two missions into United Nations peacekeeping operations. Instead, external partners augmented the capacities of the African Union in those operations and also provided direct support to national contingents. Finally, for operations in which contingents are primarily operating in their own national territory such as the Multinational

Joint Task Force to combat Boko Haram and the African Union-led Regional Task Force for the elimination of the Lord's Resistance Army, mission support is primarily the responsibility of the individual troop-contributing countries, to whom partners provide support on a voluntary and bilateral basis.

43. In situations where mission support requires collaboration between numerous entities to succeed, mission support is most effective when each actor performs tasks within its expertise, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities and under a clearly understood command and control framework. However, best practice indicates that some planning, coordination and compliance elements should always remain joint responsibilities in a true partnership setting. Mission support arrangements for African Union peace support operations cannot rely on fixed templates. Instead, a flexible approach should be employed based on standard mission support principles adapted and applied to the context and requirements of a peace support operation to identify which actor — whether the African Union Commission, the United Nations Secretariat, troop- or police-contributing countries, subregional or external partners — has the comparative advantage for each mission support task. Mission support would be considered from the earliest stages of planning, as support considerations affect other mandating and financing decisions. Options for mission support would be presented to the Peace and Security Council and the Security Council as part of the options developed through the joint strategic assessment and in alignment with the recommended financing models.

#### **Principles of mission support**

44. Mission support to an African Union peace support operation should be provided in a timely, efficient, effective and accountable manner. General principles governing mission support should include the use of managed and phased deployment; a light, flexible support footprint utilizing the capabilities of troop and police contributors, enabling units and implementing partners; and multiple and combined lines of supply through commercial contracts, military enablers and force assets. Logistical operations should be designed effectively to avoid double handling and multiple stages of interim storage and waste, keeping in mind that mission operations and infrastructure should pose minimal impact on natural resources, the environment, surrounding communities and cultural sites.

45. Troop- and police-contributing countries are responsible for the preparation of formed units for service in African Union peace operations. Units should be vetted during selection, adequately trained and fully equipped. They must deploy with the required minimum capacity to ensure self-sufficiency for life support during the initial phase and the capability to be self-sustaining thereafter. Troop- and police-contributing countries should maintain over-the-horizon support, including supply chains for consumables and spare parts for their deployed units. The critical role of bilateral partners in assisting troop- and police-contributing countries to meet gaps in equipment and capabilities must be acknowledged. In addition to operational requirements, predeployment training must provide personnel with the understanding of their obligations under international humanitarian, human rights and refugee law as well as standards of conduct, including with regard to the prohibition against sexual exploitation and abuse, and there must be sufficient command and control within national contingents to enforce discipline and ensure adherence to these standards.

46. Support provided by the United Nations would take into account considerations such as the safety and security and welfare of United Nations personnel; provision of support in a fully transparent and accountable manner; conformity with United Nations rules and regulations; and strict compliance with the human rights due diligence policy and standards of conduct. These arrangements

would be set out in a memorandum of understanding between the United Nations and the African Union and in line with United Nations standards and practices.

### **Mission support tasks**

47. Regardless of the mandate of a specific mission, each mission must have the capability to undertake a core set of mission support tasks in order to deliver on its mandate. The decision to assign responsibility for delivering on these tasks to the African Union, the United Nations or another entity would be based upon the determination of comparative advantage on a case-by-case basis. These tasks include, but are not limited to:

- recruitment and personnel management
- budgeting, financial and audit management
- reimbursement and claims management
- procurement, acquisition and contracts management
- property management
- movement control
- surface transport
- air transport
- rations management and catering services
- fuel management
- general supplies
- warehousing and material handling
- water and wastewater management
- solid waste and hazardous waste management
- power generation and energy efficiency
- engineering, facilities and camp services management
- vehicle fleet management and maintenance
- medical services including medical evacuation capacity
- equipment verification
- geospatial information systems and cartographic services
- communications and information technology systems
- environmental management
- support to and implementation of compliance and accountability frameworks on human rights, international humanitarian law and conduct and discipline
- welfare management
- other relevant senior management functions.

48. A detailed accountability framework would determine the policies and procedures to govern actions to be taken, including clear delineation of roles and responsibilities, delegations of authority, key performance indicators, monitoring and reporting instruments, audit and other oversight requirements and complaints and response mechanisms.

49. The report on the future of United Nations peace operations indicated that the current administrative framework for United Nations peace operations is slow, cumbersome and averse to risk, and current processes have proved ineffective when applied to volatile environments. These challenges are relevant when the United Nations is requested to support African Union peace support operations and are compounded when the United Nations is asked to support higher-tempo operations than those undertaken by the United Nations, as is the case with the offensive operations currently mandated or authorized by the African Union, entailing combat or counter-terrorism. As noted in the report of the joint review, the United Nations must revise its internal administrative processes, policies and procedures to more effectively support modern field operations, both its own and those of the African Union. Indeed, I indicated during the Security Council thematic debate on peacekeeping on 6 April 2017 that changing the rules and regulations to facilitate the work of peace operations is one of nine areas of reform to be pursued by the Organization.

## **VI. Compliance and oversight for United Nations support of African Union peace support operations**

50. The Security Council in its resolution [2320 \(2016\)](#) encouraged the African Union to finalize its human rights and conduct and discipline frameworks to ensure that its peace support operations are conducted in compliance with international humanitarian and human rights standards and to ensure oversight and accountability, underscoring the importance of these commitments and the requirement for oversight by the Security Council for operations authorized by the Security Council. The contours of this framework were outlined in the report of the High Representative for the African Union Peace Fund of August 2016. The African Union Commission is working on mainstreaming human rights as part of mission planning and management as well as standardizing protection mechanisms — which currently exist only in AMISOM — across all of its missions. Pursuant to resolution [2320 \(2016\)](#), the African Union is expected to provide an update on revised benchmarks and timelines for the implementation of the outstanding elements of the frameworks.

### **A. Human rights**

51. The need to develop and implement a robust and effective human rights framework for African Union peace support operations has previously been recognized by the African Union, the United Nations and United Nations Member States. Some of the peace support operations the African Union is likely to undertake, specifically high-tempo combat missions, carry their own specific risks and requirements in relation to compliance with international human rights, humanitarian and refugee standards.

52. Building and implementing an adequate human rights framework and establishing the related capacity for peace support operations will require a significant political and financial investment in both organizations by the international community, member States and troop-contributing countries. The current capacity of the African Union consists of a very small number of dedicated staff.

53. Considering its own mandate and institutional experience, the United Nations is in a strong position to support and advise the African Union on the establishment and adoption of relevant policies, methodologies, guidance and mechanisms in the

field of selection and screening, training, conduct and discipline, monitoring, accountability, protection of civilians, rules and regulations guiding African Union peace support operations, and planning. It will be critical to ensure that the United Nations is able to devote specific and adequate capacity to meet African Union requests for support.

54. In 2011, the United Nations adopted a formalized approach to the issue of human rights standards and United Nations support to security forces with the promulgation of the human rights due diligence policy. That policy sets out principles and measures to ensure that such support is consistent with the Organization's purposes and principles as set out in the Charter and its obligations under international law to respect, promote and encourage respect for international humanitarian, human rights and refugee law. Observations from recent experiences in implementing the policy for peace support operations were presented to the Security Council in the report of the joint review ([A/71/410-S/2016/809](#)). While the human rights due diligence policy is primarily an internal United Nations requirement, its implementation undoubtedly provides a space to support compliance by African Union operations with international human rights and humanitarian standards and therefore improves the chances of the ultimate success of the operation.

55. To realize fully the strengthened partnership between the United Nations and African Union on peace and security, the United Nations needs to significantly reinforce its existing capacity, processes and structures at Headquarters to ensure full compliance with the requirements under the human rights due diligence policy, including with regard to communication to entities receiving its support, and clarification of roles and responsibilities for conducting risk assessments and implementing mitigating measures. In addition, the United Nations must have appropriate capacity to perform the required monitoring and reporting functions in the theatre of operations receiving support.

## **B. Conduct and discipline**

56. The management of autonomous forces in peacekeeping, including those of the African Union, requires a framework of accountability intrinsic to an external command and control structure, operating within the standards of conduct of the African Union. It also requires monitoring mechanisms to ensure compliance and mechanisms to ensure the provision of victim assistance, where required.

57. The African Union needs to put in place a conduct and discipline framework that sets out strategic, programmatic and operational expectations for all stakeholders — including the United Nations, the African Union and troop- and police-contributing countries. This framework would include (a) standards that are equivalent to United Nations standards and are reflected in standard agreements with contributing countries and host country authorities, as appropriate; (b) monitoring mechanisms to ensure the consistent implementation of standards of conduct, including systems to support monitoring activities, such as misconduct tracking databases; (c) compliance mechanisms to ensure preventative measures, including training to enable uniformed components to discharge their responsibilities, vetting and awareness-raising; (d) accountability measures to address cases of non-compliance, including but not limited to immediate removal and replacement of individuals reported to have violated conditions of service, sanctions in substantiated cases and criminal prosecution, as applicable, in the most serious cases such as those involving sexual exploitation and abuse; (e) remediation measures to address harm done to victims of violations of the standards of conduct,



including sexual exploitation and abuse; and (f) reporting mechanisms to ensure transparency in matters of conduct and discipline.

58. The standards for deployment set out in the United Nations operational guidance for the implementation of Security Council resolution [2272 \(2016\)](#) are a critical point of reference for the African Union in developing its conduct and discipline framework and in considering the criteria that should be in place prior to the deployment of military contingents and formed police units.

59. There is also a need for a joint agreement between the United Nations and the African Union which describes the level, types and extent of support that would be expected from the United Nations in the implementation of the African Union's conduct and discipline framework, while ensuring that responsibility for addressing violations such as sexual exploitation and abuse remain with those directly accountable.

## VII. Conclusion

60. Over the years, the partnership between the United Nations and African Union has evolved significantly, as noted on many previous occasions. The Security Council in resolution [2320 \(2016\)](#) reaffirmed its commitment to further enhancing the Organization's collaboration with the African Union, and that resolution therefore represented a key milestone in the partnership. In the past six months, much progress has been made at the technical level on different modalities for United Nations support to African Union peace support operations as well as on the necessary safeguards to be put in place to ensure a proper accountability framework, with a view to more systematically operationalizing the future partnership.

61. African Union peace support operations should be seen as a tool of the entire international community to address crises on the African continent. This must be factored in the development of new strategic thinking on the necessary diversity of peace operations. Considering the limitations of the United Nations peacekeeping doctrine with regard to peace enforcement and counter-terrorism, the African Union peace support operations are a tool for the United Nations to better discharge its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security in certain situations. This ability of the African Union therefore constitutes an asset for the international community. The African initiatives in the Sahel, in the Lake Chad Basin and in Somalia illustrate the increasing complementary role played by the African Union.

62. However, the joint review of available mechanisms to finance and support African Union peace support operations mandated by the Security Council noted how African Union peace support operations had suffered from a number of recurrent capacity gaps and challenges, arising in part from the Union's limited finances. Therefore, while it is clear that the African Union must continue to build its capacity to plan, finance, sustain and oversee its own missions, predictable and adequate funding for African Union operations is absolutely crucial for the international community as a whole.

63. In the past decade, we have seen that these operations benefit from joint oversight by the two organizations. Notwithstanding the many outstanding technical aspects related to United Nations support to African Union peace support operations, the principal decision to take forward sustainable financing and expand the scope of mission support for African Union peace support operations is first and foremost political.

64. While the proposed framework of decision-making will make joint action more effective, further technical work needs to be undertaken to agree on the modalities for joint analysis, planning and assessment as well as reporting to the relevant intergovernmental bodies. Such tools could support Member States in making informed decisions to address any given situation and help to ensure coordinated delivery on mandated tasks by both the United Nations and the African Union. In order for this work to continue, I recommend that the Council endorse the proposed joint assessment and planning process set forth in this report, which can be adapted on a case-by-case basis, to support the decision-making of legislative bodies of the respective organizations.

65. Beyond the use of voluntary contributions through trust funds, the United Nations has identified four options through which United Nations assessed contributions could be used to help to meet the requirements of African Union peace support operations, noting that no single option is appropriate for all situations: (a) subvention in exceptional or emergency circumstances, (b) joint financing of a jointly developed budget, (c) United Nations support office and (d) joint financing of a hybrid mission. Three of these models are available for use today. The option of a jointly developed budget would require additional work by the Secretariat and the African Union Commission before it could be put into practice. In the interim, I would strongly recommend that the Security Council endorse this option in principle.

66. The United Nations recommends that the African Union develop its own reimbursement systems for personnel and contingent-owned equipment that meet the requirements of its peace support operations. The Secretariat is prepared to work with all relevant stakeholders to help to develop such a framework, recognizing that General Assembly approval is required for reimbursement rates determined by the African Union to be payable through United Nations assessed contributions and for a process to be established to facilitate the application of the human rights due diligence policy to reimbursement.

67. In the present report it is also noted that mission support approaches must be adapted for the context of a specific African Union peace support operation. A flexible mission support model should be implemented in which tasks such as planning, coordination, verifications and compliance are shared. Developing joint planning and coordination structures in which the African Union and the United Nations function as partners and on the basis of their respective responsibilities as spelled out in the Charter and the Constitutive Act, as described above, is important in this regard. The roles of support providers should be determined through an assessment of comparative advantage and should be subject to review and change. The multiplicity of support actors, including troop- and police-contributing countries, the African Union, the United Nations, subregional and other partners, will increase transaction costs and create challenges in coordination but may be necessary for the success of operations given the unique capabilities and expertise each actor can bring to bear.

68. As was noted in the report of the joint review, the United Nations must revise its own internal administrative processes, policies and procedures to better support modern field operations, whether its own or those of the African Union. I intend to review these procedures in the contexts of the ongoing peace and security architecture review and management reform processes. The time has come to put the requirements of the field at the heart of the operations of the United Nations.

69. I welcome the efforts made by the African Union in developing compliance and accountability frameworks for human rights and conduct and discipline, including policies, mechanisms and processes to integrate these elements into the

planning, functions and conduct of its operations as well as the capacity and expertise required for their implementation.

70. Significant efforts and investment in both organizations are still required to complete the development of effective and adequate frameworks and capacities for compliance and accountability in these areas. The United Nations stands ready to support the African Union in these efforts, though it may require additional resources to effectively support the conceptualization, establishment and improvement of relevant mechanisms to prevent and address violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law and cases of sexual exploitation and abuses committed in the context of security operations.

71. We live in a highly volatile and turbulent world. It is incumbent upon those with the vested responsibility for ensuring peace and security to consider a full range of responses required to address existing and emerging threats. Fully operationalizing the United Nations partnership with the African Union, in particular its peace support operations, presents a unique opportunity for the international community to provide a timely and context-specific response to an emerging crisis. Such a partnership is imperative, given the complexity and multiplicity of conflicts today.

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