

UN Support to African Union-Led Peace Support Operations: What Next for Resolution 2719?

Bitania Tadesse and Jenna Russo



Cover Photo: Representatives from the African Union Peace and Security Council and United Nations Security Council meet in Addis Ababa for the 17th Annual Joint Consultative Meeting. October 6, 2023. Sandra Barrows/UNOAU.

Disclaimer: The views expressed in this paper represent those of the authors and not necessarily those of the International Peace Institute. IPI welcomes consideration of a wide range of perspectives in the pursuit of a well-informed debate on critical policies and issues in international affairs.

IPI Publications

Albert Trithart, *Editor and Research Fellow*

Felix Romier, *Editorial Intern*

Suggested Citation:

Bitania Tadesse and Jenna Russo, "UN Support to African Union–Led Peace Support Operations: What Next for Resolution 2719?," International Peace Institute, September 2024.

© by International Peace Institute, 2024
All Rights Reserved

www.ipinst.org

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

BITANIA TADESSE is the Policy Specialist for Africa at the International Peace Institute.

Email: tadesse@ipinst.org

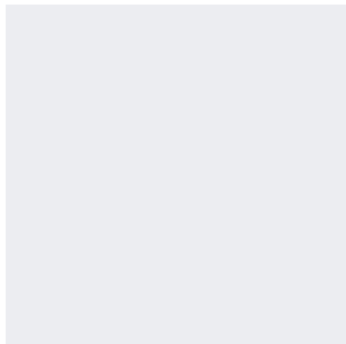
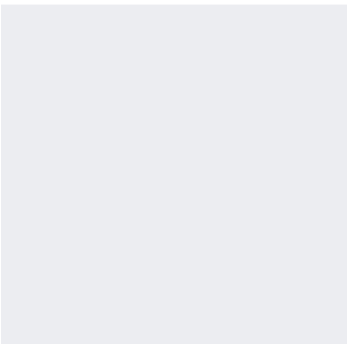
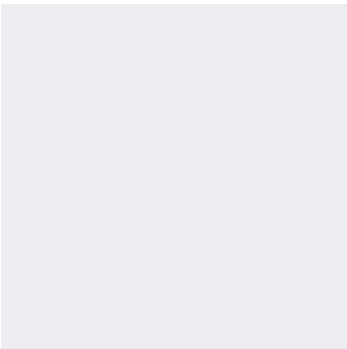
JENNA RUSSO is the Director of Research and Head of the Brian Urquhart Center for Peace Operations at the International Peace Institute.

Email: russo@ipinst.org

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to thank Zinurine Abiodu Alghali, Daniel Yilma Workie, Albert Trithart, and the other individuals who generously provided inputs and feedback on this publication.

This publication is part of IPI's Peacekeeping Observatory series, funded by the French Ministry of Armed Forces' Directorate General for International Relations and Strategy (DGRIS).



CONTENTS

Abbreviations	iii
Executive Summary	v
Introduction.....	1
What Is in the Resolution and What Needs to Be Further Clarified?	2
Joint Planning and Oversight.....	3
Burden Sharing	4
Regulations and Rules around Financing	6
Mission Models and Peace Enforcement.....	7
Mechanisms for Coordination.....	8
Coordination between the UN Security Council and AU PSC	9
Coordination within the Secretariats	11
Coordination between the AU and Subregional Organizations	13
Potential Test Cases	14
Somalia.....	14
DRC.....	15
Sudan	16
Lessons from Previous Cases and the Way Forward	16
Conclusion.....	17

ABBREVIATIONS

A3	three Africa members of the UN Security Council
ACABQ	Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions
AMISOM	AU Mission in Somalia
ATMIS	African Transition Mission in Somalia
AU	African Union
AU PSC	AU Peace and Security Council
AUSSOM	AU Support and Stabilisation Mission in Somalia
C34	UN Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations
DMSPC	UN Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance
DPO	UN Department of Peace Operations
DPPA	UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
DOS	UN Department of Operational Support
HRDDP	Human Rights Due Diligence Policy
MONUSCO	UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC
OHCHR	Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
P3	France, the UK, and the US
PSO	peace support operations
PSOD	AU Peace Support Operations Division
REC	regional economic community
RM	regional mechanism
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAMIDRC	SADC Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
T/PCCs	troop- and police-contributing countries
UNAMID	UN-AU Hybrid Operation in Darfur
UNITAMS	UN Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan
UNOAU	UN Office to the AU

Executive Summary

UN Security Council Resolution 2719, adopted unanimously in December 2023, is an important victory for those who have been advocating for more sustainable and predictable financing for African Union–led peace support operations (AU PSOs). While the Security Council has previously provided AU missions with access to UN assessed contributions on an exceptional basis, Resolution 2719 helps to regularize this process, outlining a series of steps for joint UN-AU planning and authorization by the two councils.

The UN and AU now need to operationalize the resolution. This will require clarifying several elements. First, clarity is needed on what is required to trigger the initial joint planning process and on the level of oversight the Security Council should maintain over missions authorized under the resolution. Second, considering that the resolution caps financing through UN assessed contributions at 75 percent, there are questions over how to close the 25 percent financing gap. Third, it is unclear how UN financing regulations and rules will be adapted to fit the needs of AU PSOs, what the reimbursement rates will be for contributing countries, and how the UN and AU can work together in creating and managing mission budgets. Finally, it remains to be determined what types of AU-led missions the resolution might be used to finance.

Coordination among the AU Commission, UN Secretariat, AU Peace and Security Council, and UN Security Council will also be critical to operationalizing Resolution 2719. The AU and UN have established mechanisms to facilitate technical and political engagement as part of their partnership on peace and security. However, Resolution 2719 may necessitate refining these mechanisms and establishing new ones, requiring innovation from both the AU and UN. An important next step is to map out the appropriate coordination mechanisms and to clarify the roles and responsibilities of each organization and their respective departments. However, for the resolution to be implemented successfully, these coordination mechanisms need to be used more practically, not simply as a formality.

Another critical question is what will be the first test case for operationalizing Resolution 2719. The AU and UN share a strong commitment to ensuring the

success of the first case, since it will inform the future joint authorization of missions. While many are cautious about discussing specific cases, pressing security needs and expectations raised by the adoption of the resolution have spurred discussions about potential test cases, including Somalia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Sudan.

While several processes are already underway to further clarify the resolution, the following recommendations should be considered to operationalize the resolution and strengthen its implementation:

- **Joint planning and coordination:** The UN Secretariat and AU Commission should finalize joint planning guidelines and modalities. The UN Security Council and AU Peace and Security Council should also develop modalities for coordinating and making decisions. The Security Council should clarify the level and type of oversight it intends to maintain, and its three African members should have a clear strategy for engaging other council members. In addition, the AU and regional economic communities need to further standardize, institutionalize, and streamline their processes for mandating and coordinating the deployment of missions.
- **Burden sharing:** UN and AU member states, together with the EU and other donors, should discuss in greater detail how to cover the 25 percent funding gap. The UN Security Council should also clarify what the options are if there is a significant funding shortfall.
- **Capacity building:** The AU should begin building the capacity of the departments responsible for backstopping PSOs, as well as of its Permanent Observer Mission to the UN. The UN Secretariat may also need to enhance the capacity of departments to spearhead the implementation of the resolution and that of the UN Office to the AU.
- **Regulations and rules:** The UN General Assembly should consider how to adapt UN regulations and rules to fit the needs of AU-led PSOs. The UN and AU should also establish modalities for a joint budgeting process to be approved by the General Assembly.

Introduction

On December 21, 2023, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2719 in what has been hailed as a historic step in consolidating the UN-African Union (AU) partnership. It is the culmination of nearly two decades of effort and intense negotiations by policymakers from both organizations. While the resolution is primarily known as a financing framework that allows AU-led peace support operations (PSOs) to receive funding from UN assessed contributions, it could also represent a significant political shift by strengthening the relationship between the two organizations and recognizing the growing role of the AU in

peace and security matters on the African continent.

The resolution's adoption is an important victory for those who have been advocating for more sustainable and predictable financing for AU-led PSOs. Yet gaps remain when it comes to the interpretation of the resolution, and the two organizations need to do significant work to operationalize the joint efforts it outlines. The purpose of this policy report is to consider what comes next for implementing Resolution 2719, including areas of the resolution that require further clarification, the types of coordination mechanisms needed, and what might be an appropriate first test case for its implementation.¹

Box 1. Key documents and decisions related to the UN-AU partnership on financing of AU-led PSOs

- The report from the UN-AU panel on modalities for support to AU-led PSOs makes recommendations on financing options for UN-authorized, AU-led PSOs (A/63/666-S/2008/813, December 31, 2008).
- The High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) presents recommendations on the use of UN assessed contributions by AU-led PSOs on a case-by-case basis (S/2015/446, June 17, 2015).
- The report from the joint UN-AU review of available mechanisms to finance and support AU-led PSOs authorized by the Security Council presents an assessment of the evolution of the UN-AU partnership, the various types of support provided to AU-led PSOs, and the challenges encountered (A/71/410-S/2016/809, September 28, 2016).
- Security Council Resolution 2320 relates to cooperation between the UN and regional organizations, particularly the AU, on the maintenance of international peace and security (S/RES/232, November 18, 2016).
- Security Council Resolution 2378 is on peacekeeping reform and the council's willingness to support practical steps for AU-led PSOs, which could be partly financed through UN assessed contributions (S/RES/2378, September 20, 2017).
- The report of the secretary-general on options for authorization and support for AU-led PSOs presents recommendations to the Security Council on joint decision-making and financing options for AU-led PSOs (S/2017/454, May 26, 2017).
- The Joint UN-AU Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security offers a systematic and comprehensive approach to the UN-AU partnership in all aspects of peace and security (2017).
- The joint declaration of the secretary-general and chairperson of the AU Commission outlines the guiding principles underpinning cooperation between the two organizations in responding to conflict and crises in Africa (December 6, 2018).
- The report of the secretary-general on the implementation of Security Council Resolutions 2320 and 2378 and on financing of AU-led PSOs outlines possible funding models and joint decision-making processes for AU-mandated and Security Council-authorized operations (S/2023/303, May 1, 2023).
- The AU Consensus Paper on Predictable, Adequate and Sustainable Financing for African Union Peace and Security Activities gives direction on options for financing models and provides clarification on burden sharing (2023).

¹ The findings are based on a desk review of relevant literature as well as interviews with UN and AU officials, member-state representatives, and external experts.

- The AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) communiqué from its 1153rd session increased the ceiling of the Crisis Reserve Facility from \$5 million to \$10 million for 2023 and 2024. It also requested the three African members of the Security Council (A3) to resume consultations with relevant stakeholders toward the adoption of a Security Council resolution on financing AU-led PSOs (May 12, 2023).
- The AU PSC communiqué from its 1175th session mandated the AU Commission to provide technical support to the PSC and the A3 to develop a draft resolution to be submitted to the Security Council for consideration and adoption. Additionally, it requested the A3, with the support of the AU Commission, to commence negotiations on said resolution for consideration and adoption by the Security Council before the end of December 2023 (September 23, 2023).
- The report from the AU PSC on its activities and the state of peace and security in Africa noted that Resolution 2719 is an initial step in the right direction but falls short of Africa's request for 100 percent financing by UN assessed contributions (February 17–18, 2024).
- The Decision on the Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the Operationalization of the AU Peace Fund at the 44th Ordinary Session of the AU Executive Council called upon the AU Commission to submit a proposal to the Security Council after the adoption by the AU PSC by August 2024 to trigger the operationalization of Resolution 2719 (EX.CL/Dec.1240(XLIV), February 14–15, 2024).
- The 37th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the AU welcomed Resolution 2719 as a step toward securing predictable, adequate, and sustainable financing for AU-led PSOs (February 17–18, 2024).

What Is in the Resolution and What Needs to Be Further Clarified?

Framed under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, the resolution's main purpose is to chart a path for AU-led PSOs to receive predictable and sustainable funding from UN assessed contributions. While the Security Council has previously provided AU missions with access to assessed contributions on an exceptional basis,² Resolution 2719 helps to regularize this process, outlining a series of steps for joint UN-AU planning and authorization by the two councils (see Figure 1). Broadly speaking, the building blocks of the resolution include the following:

- Requests for funding will be considered by the Security Council on a case-by-case basis, based on the findings of joint UN-AU assessments.
- Missions must be under the direct and effective

The adoption of Resolution 2719 is an important victory for those who have been advocating for more sustainable and predictable financing for AU-led peace support operations.

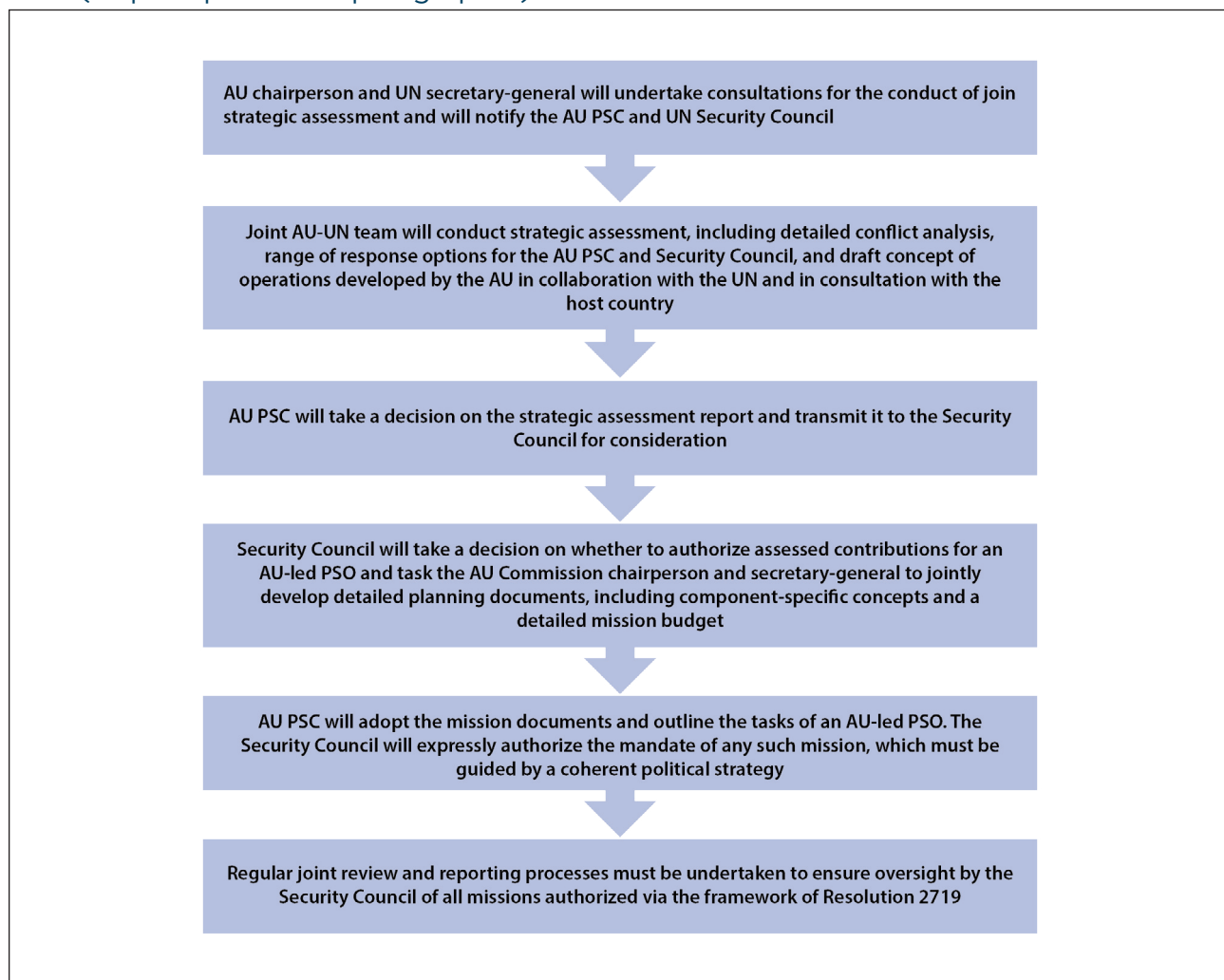
command and control of the AU.

- Mandates will be expressly authorized by the Security Council and guided by a coherent political strategy.
- Assessed contributions will be capped at 75 percent of the mission budget, with the remaining 25 percent to be jointly mobilized by the UN and AU.
- UN support provided to AU-led PSOs will be delivered in accordance with the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy (HRDDP) and must comply with a range of AU and UN frameworks on compliance, human rights, and conduct and discipline.
 - The process for funding must comply with the UN financial regulations and rules, standards for financial oversight, and accountability mechanisms.

While the resolution stipulates various requirements that must be in place for AU-led PSOs to receive UN assessed contributions, further clarification is required on several elements of the resolu-

² For example, the UN-AU Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and UN logistical support to AU-led missions in Somalia, including AMISOM and ATMIS. For more, see: Eugene Chen, "Not a Silver Bullet: The Push for Assessed Contributions for African-Led Peace Support Operations," New York University Center on International Cooperation, November 2023.

Figure 1. Process for the Security Council to authorize an AU-led mission via Resolution 2719 (as per operational paragraph 3)



tion, including how, when, and under what conditions Resolution 2719 can be triggered; processes for joint planning and oversight; burden sharing; financial regulations and rules; and the scope of mission models envisaged to access funding.

Joint Planning and Oversight

Resolution 2719 makes clear that any potential authorization for a mission to receive assessed contributions will result from joint planning by the AU and UN.³ The two organizations are currently developing joint planning guidelines and detailed modalities, which will provide detail on how to operationalize this provision.

One point that needs clarification is what is required to trigger the initial joint planning process. Member states have expressed different views on this, including whether the initial scoping can be undertaken on the prerogative of the UN Secretariat and the AU Commission or whether there must be a formal request from the UN Security Council. During negotiations, some permanent members of the Security Council advocated for the resolution to include language specifying that the first step in planning should be a letter from the Security Council to approve the joint review. However, the three African members of the council (A3) and some other council members were against this, in part because it would

³ UN Security Council Resolution 2719 December 21, 2023, UN Doc. S/RES/2719, para. 3.

open the door for a potential veto.⁴ Language on a formal council request was ultimately excluded, with the resolution instead noting that the AU chairperson and secretary-general must “notify” the Security Council and AU PSC of consultations on a joint strategic assessment. However, some remain confused as to what precisely is required to trigger joint planning. One expert noted that the US in particular has indicated that the planning process cannot start until the AU Commission and UN Secretariat “get a green light from the Security Council.”⁵ It will thus be important for the two organizations to clarify this point, including within the context of the joint planning guidelines and detailed modalities that are being developed.

More broadly, member states hold different opinions on the level of oversight the Security Council should maintain over missions deployed under the framework of Resolution 2719. According to Article 54 of the UN Charter, the Security Council must be kept “fully informed” of all activities “undertaken or in contemplation” through regional arrangements. Resolution 2719 further articulates the need for “regular joint review and reporting processes to ensure oversight by the Security Council of all authorized operations that access UN assessed contributions.” Yet these specifications leave room for interpretation, and there are differences of opinion among the five permanent members of the Security Council. The P3 (France, the UK, and the US) advocate for the Security Council to take a more active role and to be consulted (whether formally or informally) from the beginning of consultations and throughout the entire process.⁶ As noted by one UN official, the P3 “will not want anything to be precooked and then presented to the council,” nor will they want the planning process to be too driven by the AU without sufficient UN involvement.⁷

Clarification is needed on what is required to trigger the initial joint planning process and the level of oversight the Security Council should maintain.

Yet other member states, including China and Russia, have advocated for greater AU leadership. China’s perspective is that the AU should maintain a high level of control over missions it leads on the continent and should take the lead role even within the joint planning process. China has also articulated that it does not want missions deployed under the framework of Resolution 2719 to become encumbered by heavy UN processes, including too much oversight by the council.⁸ Many stakeholders have identified the tension between the need to balance expediency and flexibility, two critical comparative advantages of AU missions, with potentially cumbersome joint planning and oversight.

Thus, even among those who advocate for a stronger UN role, discussions are ongoing regarding how to ensure that council oversight does not become burdensome. As recommended by one member state, the Security Council could require reporting at six-month rather than three-month intervals. It could also coordinate with the AU PSC not only through formal interaction but also through informal discussions at the expert level and structures like the ad hoc working group on conflict prevention.⁹

While Russia also advocates for greater AU ownership, its motivation for this stems from concerns that missions financed under the framework of Resolution 2719 could be too driven by the strategic interests of the P3. Thus, Russia has insisted on the need for host-country consent and the full support and ownership of the AU.¹⁰

Burden Sharing

The most contentious element of negotiations on Resolution 2719 has been the issue of burden sharing. At the insistence of the US, the resolution includes a cap of 75 percent financing through

4 Interview no. 9, AU official, May 1, 2024.

5 Interview no. 3, UN official, March 12, 2024.

6 Interview no. 10, member-state representative, April 12, 2024.

7 Interview no. 4, UN official, April 12, 2024.

8 Interview no. 9, member-state representative, May 1, 2024.

9 Interview no. 10, member-state representative, April 12, 2024.

10 Written comments received July 8, 2024.

assessed contributions, with the remaining 25 percent to be “jointly mobilized” by the AU and UN. The Security Council commits to consider all viable options in the event of a significant financial shortfall. While France and the UK did not push for the 75 percent cap specifically, they have been clear about their desire to see a “significant contribution” on the part of the AU.¹¹ China has also been a supporter of burden sharing, though less vocally. While China abstained on the US amendment that added the 75 percent cap, it has its own concerns about its financial contributions increasing and wants to see the AU and other partners bear part of the overall financial burden.¹²

This has caused consternation on the part of the AU, which sees the deployment of its PSOs as a “global good” that should be fully funded via assessed contributions. According to the 2023 AU Consensus Paper on Predictable, Adequate and Sustainable Financing for AU Peace and Security Activities, and pursuant to Article 17(1) of the PSC Protocol, “In instances where the UN authorizes the AU to undertake a peace support operation in lieu of the UN, the UN should provide the means to undertake such missions.”¹³ While there are historical examples of the UN authorizing missions it did not pay for, the AU interprets the council’s primary responsibility for international peace and security to mean that it should also foot the bill.¹⁴

When it comes to closing the 25 percent gap, one likely source of funding from the AU side is the AU Peace Fund, which comprises contributions primarily from AU member states. In 2015, the AU started a process of revitalizing the Peace Fund to provide, for the first time, a dedicated budget for operational peace and security activities. The fund supports the AU’s work across three windows: (1) Mediation and Preventive Diplomacy; (2)

Institutional Capacity; and (3) PSOs. While the purpose of boosting the fund was to demonstrate Africa’s ownership of its peace and security agenda and reduce reliance on partners, the money available through the fund is not enough to fully cover the 25 percent gap, and some African member states are reticent to use the reserve to pay for UN-authorized missions through 2719. Additionally, the AU Consensus Paper qualifies the application of the 25 percent noting that it would ‘progressively cover in large part the preparation stage of AU-led PSOs.’¹⁵ Thus, while the resolution does not specify what portion of the 25 percent should be covered by the AU, it is widely understood that funding from other non-AU sources will need to be mobilized.

Further, some African member states have pointed to the significant investments they have already made in developing the institutions and capacity required to generate troops for both AU- and UN-led missions. These preparatory costs—including force preparation and follow-on costs like mental and physical health-care for troops—are substantial but are not usually considered by the UN when evaluating mission costs. One AU official recounted, for example, how Burundi spent approximately \$6 million per year on “hidden costs” to treat peacekeeping troops who were maimed or wounded as well as on uniforms and ammunition.¹⁶ These costs may be even higher in peace enforcement contexts where AU troops engage in active war-fighting. While some of these costs can be captured in specific reimbursement schemes for AU-led PSOs, it may also be appropriate to reflect African countries’ broader financial costs and investments when calculating their overall contribution toward the 25 percent.

The EU is another likely source of additional funding. The EU is already a significant supporter

The 75 percent cap on financing through assessed contributions has caused consternation on the part of the AU, which sees the deployment of peace support operations as a “global good.”

11 Interview no. 10, member-state representative, April 12, 2024.

12 Written comments received July 8, 2024.

13 African Union, “Consensus Paper on Predictable, Adequate, and Sustainable Financing for African Union Peace and Security Activities,” March 2023, para. 40.

14 African Union, *Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union*, Article 17 (1).

15 African Union, “Consensus Paper on Predictable, Adequate, and Sustainable Financing for African Union Peace and Security Activities.”

16 Interview no. 8, AU official, March 25, 2024.

of AU-led PSOs in contexts like Somalia, where it pays a large share of the annual budget of the AU mission in Somalia (ATMIS and its predecessor, AMISOM). While the EU has indicated its willingness to discuss contributions under the framework of Resolution 2719, some EU member states have expressed reservations about simply providing a blank check to cover the gap, given that EU member states already contribute 24 percent of the UN peacekeeping budget. EU member states have thus pointed out that the resolution “welcomes the commitment and ambition” of AU member states to “contribute significantly within their available means” to AU-led PSOs under the principle of burden sharing.¹⁷

If UN and AU efforts to jointly mobilize the remaining 25 percent nevertheless result in a “significant shortfall,” the council’s commitment to consider “all viable options” will be a last resort to meet the full budget of an AU-led PSO.¹⁸ Thus, one lingering question is what may be included in “all viable options,” including whether additional assessed funds could be used. As noted by one member state involved in the negotiations, the resolution “does not negate the possibility of using assessed contributions if all options have been exhausted.”¹⁹ Yet from the perspective of the US, “They’re not going to get anywhere in Congress unless they have assurances about the 25 percent coming from somewhere”—in other words, from a source other than assessed contributions.²⁰ It is likely that the resolution text was made intentionally vague for the purpose of keeping both the AU and the US on board. Nevertheless, the specific interpretation will need to be clarified to ensure that a lack of funding does not derail the utilization or success of the resolution.

Regulations and Rules around Financing

Resolution 2719 stipulates that the process for funding AU-led PSOs must comply with UN financial regulations and rules, standards for

financial oversight, and accountability mechanisms. While this report does not go into detail on the technicalities of UN financial regulations and rules, a couple of points are worth mentioning.

First, UN regulations and rules—including processes for procurement and reimbursement—are designed to serve the purposes of UN peace operations, not to meet the demands of peace enforcement or war-fighting. This has created challenges for the AU mission in Somalia, which has struggled with the “slow-moving and complicated system” of UN resourcing as well as “detailed scrutiny and oversight by UN member states.”²¹ As noted by Paul Williams, UN support systems are “generally risk-averse, highly bureaucratic, and not designed to effectively enable mobile or agile military combat operations.”²² This has created barriers to the UN providing AMISOM/ATMIS with the higher volume of supplies needed in kinetic environments and reimbursing the mission for ammunition and other lethal supplies.

Thus, the UN will need to determine how it can adapt its existing systems to fit the needs of PSOs. Neither the General Assembly’s Fifth Committee nor the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) have initiated action on this issue to date. The UN Secretariat is currently exploring options that are within its own power to implement, including the flexible use of existing rules, drawing on lessons from AMISOM/ATMIS. Ultimately, however, the General Assembly may need to consider more significant changes to current regulations to allow for the flexibility and rapid response that the resolution aims to facilitate.

Second, and relatedly, there are questions as to whether countries contributing troops and equipment to AU-led missions will be reimbursed at the same rates as for UN peacekeeping operations. UN financial regulations and rules specify that contributions of troops and contin-

¹⁷ UN Doc. S/RES/2719, para. 6.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Interview no. 1, member-state representative, April 16, 2024.

²⁰ Interview no. 4, UN official, April 12, 2024.

²¹ Paul D. Williams, “The United Nations Support Office Model: Lessons from Somalia,” International Peace Institute, September 2024.

²² Ibid.

gent-owned equipment will be reimbursed by rates approved by the General Assembly and in line with peacekeeping operation budgets approved by the assembly.²³ Yet, as noted by the secretary-general, on average, equipment contributed to AU-led PSOs may be “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. Thus, the AU may need to develop personnel- and contingent-owned equipment reimbursement systems applicable for its peace support operations.”²⁴ While these systems would still be subject to approval by the General Assembly, the AU could propose rates that are better aligned with usage and the greater potential of wear and tear in AU-led PSOs.

Third, current UN financial regulations and rules place the responsibility for creating and managing peacekeeping budgets under the purview of the secretary-general.²⁵ As noted by Eugene Chen, while the recent UN management reforms allow the secretary-general to delegate this responsibility to UN mission leadership, they do not allow him to delegate it to non-UN entities such as AU-led PSOs.²⁶ Thus, the General Assembly will need to determine the level of autonomy and involvement the AU can have when it comes to preparing and managing its budgets. If the General Assembly decides that the UN and AU should jointly prepare mission budgets, then appropriate templates and modalities will need to be developed. The AU does have some experience reporting to the UN, as it provides financial reports on the AMISOM/ATMIS budgets. However, lack of capacity has been a key challenge, and, in the case of AMISOM/ATMIS, the Department of Operational Support (DOS) has provided significant assistance to the AU to facilitate this process. Moving forward, addressing these capacity gaps will be a key issue, whether through UN personnel

UN regulations and rules are designed to serve the purposes of UN peace operations, not to meet the demands of peace enforcement or war-fighting.

seconded to the AU or the direct enhancement of AU capabilities.

Mission Models and Peace Enforcement

Policymakers primarily frame more predictable and sustainable financing for AU-led PSOs as a way to support the deployment of peace enforcement and counterterrorism operations that do not fit within the scope of UN-led operations. Pointing to the divide between current conflict environments and what UN peacekeeping can deliver, the secretary-general’s “New Agenda for Peace” calls for “a new generation of peace enforcement missions and counterterrorism operations, led by African partners with a Security Council mandate... with guaranteed funding through assessed contributions.”²⁷

While Resolution 2719 refers to the AU’s ability to deploy peace enforcement operations “quickly to implement a clear, robust, and focused mandate,” it does not delimit the type of PSOs that can access assessed contributions through this framework. According to the AU Doctrine on Peace Support Operations, AU-led PSOs are intended to assist countries in conflict to create conditions or an enabling environment for political processes led by national and other stakeholders to prevent or resolve conflicts. Thus, they may encompass a broader range of missions than just peace enforcement operations.²⁸ While most interviewees acknowledge that the UN and AU are currently focused on facilitating peace enforcement operations, there is a question over whether Resolution 2719 may eventually be used to fund a broader range of AU-led missions.

Some member states have been wary of this idea, preferring to draw on the AU’s comparative advantage of deploying missions as a robust first responder while the UN maintains its role in

23 United Nations, *Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations*, UN Doc. ST/SGB/2013/4, July 1, 2013, Regulation 5.10, Rule 105.10.

24 UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on Options for Authorization and Support for African Union Peace Support Operations*, UN Doc. S/2017/454, May 26, 2017.

25 United Nations, *Financial Regulations and Rules*.

26 United Nations, *Financial Regulations and Rules*, Regulation 2.13, Rule 102.8 (a). For more on this, see: Chen, “Not a Silver Bullet.”

27 United Nations, “A New Agenda for Peace,” July 20, 2023.

28 African Union, “Doctrine on Peace Support Operations,” 2021, para. 23.

leading peacekeeping and special political missions.²⁹ As noted by one council member, “We do not believe it’s the time to transfer the whole range of peacekeeping in the broad sense to the AU. We believe that what the UN cannot do properly, the AU should do on peace enforcement.”³⁰ The AU has reinforced this perspective in some cases, given its strong rhetoric on the need for peace enforcement in conflict settings and the imperative of the UN providing financial support to such missions.³¹ However, the case of Sudan is already putting pressure on this position, as any potential mission in the country would likely be led by the AU and would not be a peace enforcement operation. Thus, some member states, including the US, have already expressed a more flexible approach to the range of AU-led PSOs that could receive support.³²

Some, however, view Resolution 2719 as strengthening Africa’s political leadership on peace and security more broadly. One AU official referred to this as “beauty pageant syndrome, where the UN special representative of the secretary-general wants to be seen as the lead political person on the ground, but when it comes to the bloody battle, they want the AU to take the lead.”³³ Particularly at a moment when the demand for UN peace operations has declined, some stakeholders view Resolution 2719 as ushering in a shift in leadership just as much as it facilitates financing. Broadening AU leadership may also help to counteract the perspective that the AU is merely a military provider, which fails to capture the political character of the AU and risks siloing the military and political responses, which has been a consistent concern among policy-makers.

Yet it is not clear what other types of AU-led PSOs might realistically be funded via Resolution 2719. The AU could conceivably lead lighter-weight

political missions, but these tend to be low-cost and thus may not require assessed contributions from the UN. On the other end of the spectrum, the AU is far from having the capacity needed to deploy large multidimensional peacekeeping operations, which are thus not likely to be deployed in the near term.

Mechanisms for Coordination

Coordination among the AU Commission, UN Secretariat, AU Peace and Security Council, and UN Security Council will be critical to the effective implementation of Resolution 2719. The resolution reaffirms the commitment to operationalize the provision in Chapter VIII of the UN Charter on the role of regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. The AU and UN have established mechanisms to facilitate regular technical and political engagement as part

of their partnership on peace and security (see Figure 2). These mechanisms will continue to support policy harmonization and joint decision making to achieve the objectives of Resolution 2719. However, the process may also necessitate refining existing

mechanisms and establishing new ones, requiring innovation from both the UN and AU. To this end, Resolution 2719 emphasizes “the need to ensure coherence, coordination and complementarity between African Union-led Peace Support Operations and United Nations Peace Operations, under their respective mandates and avoid duplication of efforts.”

An important next step is to map the appropriate coordination mechanisms and to clarify the roles and responsibilities of each organization and their respective departments. However, for the resolution to be implemented successfully, these coordination mechanisms need to be used more practically, not simply as a formality.³⁴

Particularly at a moment when the demand for UN peace operations has declined, some stakeholders view Resolution 2719 as ushering in a shift in leadership just as much as it facilitates financing.

29 Interview no. 3, UN official, March 12, 2024; Interview no. 10, member-state representative, April 12, 2024.

30 Interview no. 10, member-state representative, April 12, 2024.

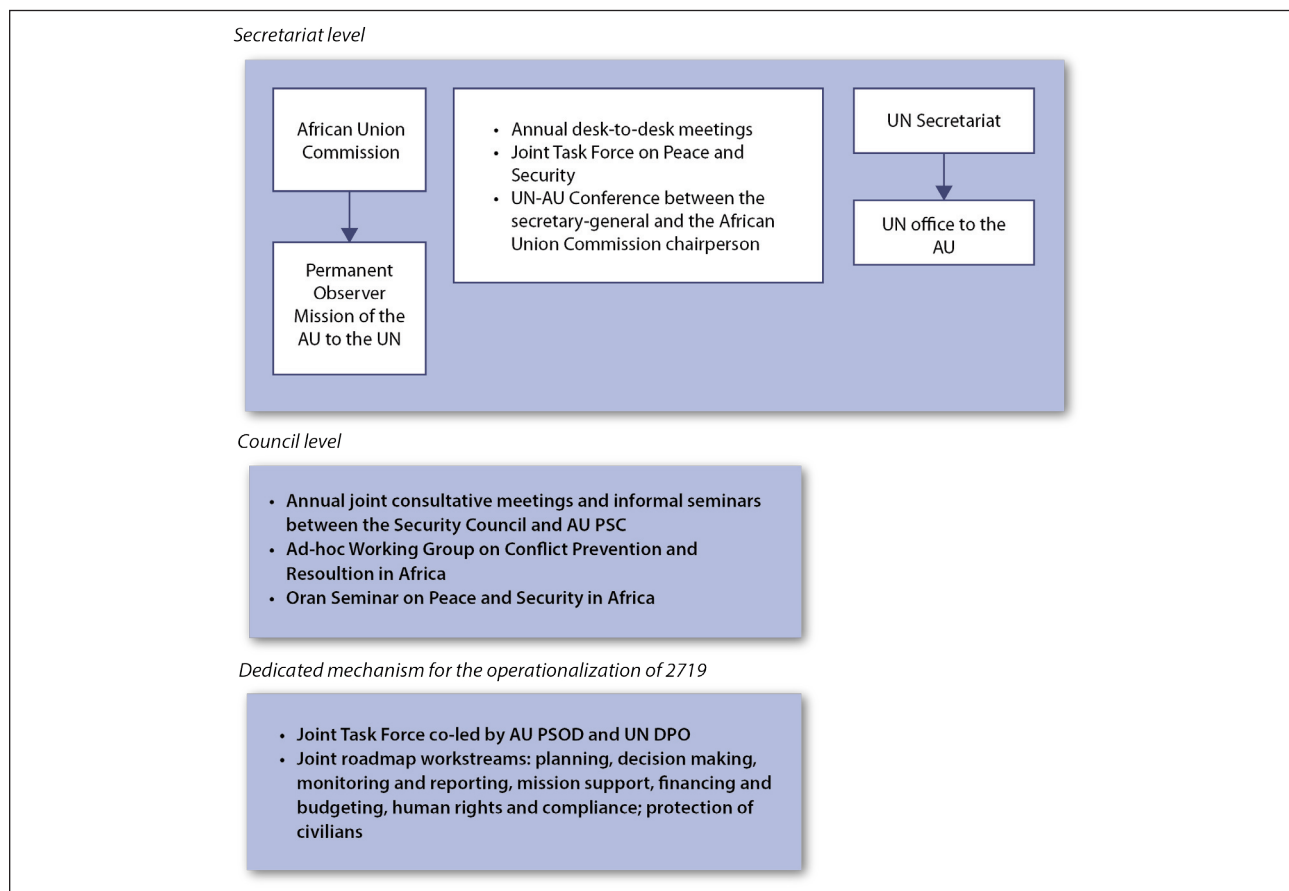
31 Interview no. 3, external expert, March 12, 2024.

32 Written comments received July 8, 2024.

33 Interview no. 8, AU official, March 25, 2024.

34 Interview no. 6, external expert, March 13, 2024.

Figure 2. Mechanisms for coordinating the UN-AU partnership on peace and security



Coordination between the UN Security Council and AU PSC

One of the existing coordination mechanisms between the UN Security Council and AU PSC is the annual consultative meeting. Since 2007, the two councils have been holding annual joint consultative meetings alternating between Addis Ababa and New York. To enhance the meetings' effectiveness, an informal session preceding the formal meeting was introduced in 2016 to allow for deliberations on thematic issues and working methods. Moreover, the substance and timeliness of the joint communiqué issued following these meetings has improved over the years.

However, more can be done to further leverage the annual engagement between the councils to better operationalize and coordinate around Resolution 2719. As it stands, the format of the annual consultative meeting tends to be less consultative and more scripted, with member states presenting statements. This space could instead be utilized to

build strategic alignment and consensus between the council on Resolution 2719, including on some of the contentious issues. The first annual consultative meeting after the adoption of Resolution 2719, scheduled to take place as a retreat in October 2024, will hence present an opportunity to hold a more in-depth consultation on progress made and the remaining details to sort out for the resolution's implementation.

Second, considering the level of coordination that Resolution 2719 requires, more frequent exchanges between the two councils beyond the annual consultative meeting would bridge organizational differences and foster consensus. These may include informal consultations and expert-level exchanges to build a common understanding of how to implement the resolution.

Within the Security Council, the A3 play a critical role in bridging between the two councils. This was evident during the negotiation of Resolution 2719. Ghana took the lead in drafting and negotiating the

resolution and brokering agreements between policymakers and diplomats in Addis Ababa and New York. After Ghana's departure from the council, Mozambique, through its presidency of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, took the lead in initiating discussions on the resolution to enable member states to share their inputs and perspectives. Following the adoption of Resolution 2719, the A3 will take on an even more important role in interfacing with the AU PSC to enhance strategic coherence in implementing the resolution. The work of the A3 would benefit from a clear strategy for engaging with the five permanent members and the other elected members of the UN Security Council. In addition, the A3 can catalyze support for the resolution by holding informal discussions with member states outside of the council, including through the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa.

The Permanent Observer Mission of the AU to the UN has demonstrated its critical role in supporting the A3 in the implementation of Resolution 2719. This role will become even more critical after January 1, 2025, when the A3 will have a new configuration without any of the members that co-penned Resolution 2719. As the Secretariat of the A3, the Permanent Observer Mission of the AU to the UN maintains institutional memory and facilitates the smooth transfer of responsibilities, including through its annual retreat with the council's outgoing, current, and incoming African members. The permanent observer mission will need to ensure that the engagement of the new African members with Resolution 2719 is guided by the decisions of the AU PSC. Its involvement in the AU task force and joint UN-AU teams currently developing the modalities for operationalizing the resolution is also critical in ensuring coordinated decision making by the A3 and AU PSC as well as efficient action by the AU Commission in implementing the resolution.

Considering the level of coordination that Resolution 2719 requires, more frequent exchanges between the two councils beyond the annual consultative meeting would bridge organizational differences and foster consensus.

One area where the A3 and AU PSC need further alignment is burden sharing. The AU PSC has expressed its dissatisfaction with the 75 percent cap, underscoring its inconsistency with the AU Assembly decision and the views articulated in the AU consensus paper.³⁵ Nonetheless, while Ghana, Mozambique, and Gabon abstained on the amendment proposed by the US to include the 75 percent cap, they ultimately supported the resolution to break the impasse and avoid any further postponement. Many AU PSC members wanted to defer the matter to the February 2024 AU Assembly.³⁶ This divergence between the A3 and AU PSC on whether to support the resolution with the cap highlights the importance of agreeing on red lines, compromises, and contingency plans to address any future divergences around implementation.

The UN Security Council and AU PSC will also need to consider how they engage with troop- and police-contributing countries (T/PCCs), particularly once they agree on a test case. The AU PSC does not currently have a regular mechanism for consulting with T/PCCs. Although the Military Coordination Committee on AMISOM/ATMIS is an important mechanism for bringing together T/PCCs, it does not regularly interface with the AU PSC. Additionally, the AU PSC does not have a body similar to the UN Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C34). The closest it has is the Specialized Technical Committee on Defense, Safety and Security, which meets annually to consider relevant policies before their adoption by the AU Assembly. However, the committee's mandate extends beyond peace support operations, as it assesses the operationalization of the broader African peace and security architecture.

As for the UN Security Council, it could replicate its existing practice of consultation with UN T/PCCs with AU T/PCCs ahead of mandate renewals and authorizations. The council could

35 African Union, *Report of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union on Its Activities and the State of Peace and Security in Africa, Reporting Period: January to December 2023*, Assembly/AU/4(XXXVII), February 17–18, 2024.

36 Tsion Hagos and Solomon Dersso, "A Landmark UN Resolution on the Financing of AU-led Peace Support Operations (PSOs) Faces Uncertain Reception in Addis Ababa," *Amani Africa Ideas Indaba*, December 22, 2023.

refine this practice by establishing joint meetings between the Security Council, the AU PSC, and T/PCCs to consider more streamlined oversight processes. Beyond formal consultations, informal ones would also enable more frequent and meaningful exchanges.

In this context, an important point to consider is the different relationships T/PCCs have with the Security Council compared to the AU PSC. Because AU-led PSOs rely extensively on the capacity of T/PCCs, T/PCCs have had more space to shape AU decision making. Moreover, AU T/PCCs are influential members of the AU PSC. In the UN Security Council, there is greater separation between the countries shaping decision-making and T/PCCs, and T/PCCs thus have less influence. In the context of Resolution 2719, it is essential to address these differences by putting in place communication channels between the AU, the UN, and T/PCCs.³⁷

Outside the Security Council, greater coordination will also be needed among the AU, the Fifth Committee, and the ACABQ, which will all make key decisions on the implementation of Resolution 2719. Certain innovative practices could bring greater synergy to these bodies. For example, UN finance experts could be deployed to the AU to become familiarized with the AU financial rules and regulation that apply to AU-mandated and Security Council–authorized operations. Similarly, AU finance experts could be deployed to the UN to become more acquainted with UN processes.³⁸ The AU, Fifth Committee, and ACABQ will also need to streamline coordination on the reimbursement framework and the financing of mission start-up even before Resolution 2719 is applied to a specific case. The AU should thus be granted access to ACABQ and Fifth Committee meetings on AU operations that access UN assessed contributions.³⁹ Additionally, like the A3 in the UN Security Council, African states serving in both committees can contribute to finding alignment on the financial regulations and rules of the two institutions.

Beyond the financial considerations, there is a need for a paradigm shift in how both institutions understand Resolution 2719. They should view Resolution 2719 as a tool for joint problem solving and decision making that is not constrained by layers of bureaucracy and reporting. This approach could strengthen the UN-AU strategic partnership even beyond the implementation of Resolution 2719 and help both organizations pursue political solutions to complex conflicts that neither can address on its own.⁴⁰

Coordination within the Secretariats

While there are existing mechanisms for coordinating between the AU Commission and UN Secretariat, Resolution 2719 introduces new requirements and expectations. Both institutions established dedicated mechanisms to coordinate on Resolution 2719 after conducting internal reflections to unpack the details and build a common understanding of key provisions.

While the Peace Support Operations Division (PSOD) has been tasked to lead on coordination in the AU Commission, in the UN Secretariat, there have been questions over the roles and responsibilities of various departments. Currently, the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) is the lead on the UN-AU partnership. However, given that Resolution 2719 primarily centers on peace enforcement operations, the Department of Peace Operations (DPO) has been given the responsibility to lead and coordinate its implementation. The Department of Operational Support (DOS) is another important actor considering its responsibility for overseeing logistics support, as it does for the UN Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS). Yet DOS does not play a political role, and, as noted by one UN official, Resolution 2719 is “about politics at the end of the day. All the logistics and finance stem from this.”⁴¹ Other Secretariat actors likely to play a role include the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance (DMSPC) on budgeting aspects

37 Interview no. 7, UN official, April 5, 2024. The mechanism may also be linked with the working group on contingent-owned equipment.

38 Interview no. 8, AU official, March 25, 2024.

39 International Peace Institute, “Peacekeeping Observatory Annual Workshop: The New Agenda for Peace and Peace Operations,” May 29, 2024.

40 Interview no. 2, UN official, March 14, 2024.

41 Ibid.

and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) on compliance.

To clarify roles and responsibilities within the Secretariat, the secretary-general established a task force led by DPO and comprising DPPA, OHCHR, DMSPC, and DOS. The task force has established a working-level mechanism that has been engaging AU Commission counterparts since May 2024, including through a visit to Addis Ababa. One department that might have interest in the agenda but is not included in the task force is the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism.

Following a decision by the UN-AU Joint Task Force on Peace and Security in April 2024, a joint UN-AU technical meeting was held to agree on modalities for the implementation of the resolution. To this end, the newly constituted joint task force on Resolution 2719 co-led by PSOD and DPO met in Addis Ababa in May 2024 and agreed on four workstreams for a joint implementation roadmap: (1) joint planning, decision making, and reporting; (2) mission support; (3) financing and budgeting; and (4) human rights compliance and protection of civilians (which will also include conduct and discipline as well as gender mainstreaming). The roadmap is expected to be adopted by the AU chairperson and UN secretary-general at the annual UN-AU conference in October 2024, as the task force continues to work on the detailed modalities for implementing the resolution across the four workstreams.⁴²

For the AU to effectively command and control AU-led PSOs, it will need a significant increase of in-house capacity. The AU only has about fifty personnel in PSOD, including staff working on mission planning, human rights compliance, and financial and budgetary matters, compared to the UN's more than 800 personnel in DPPA and DPO alone.⁴³ The AU is

For the AU to effectively command and control AU-led peace support operations, it will need a significant increase of in-house capacity.

currently directly managing only one major PSO—ATMIS—and would have difficulty managing multiple PSOs concurrently with its existing capacity. In particular, the AU needs more capacity for planning and for fulfilling the resolution's reporting requirements, including financial reporting and regular reporting to both councils. Beyond capacity, the AU may also need to consider structural changes. PSOD is a division of the Conflict Management Directorate of the AU Political Affairs, Peace, and Security Department. The AU could transform PSOD into its own directorate to elevate its position in accordance with its growing responsibilities.⁴⁴

The Permanent Observer Mission of the AU to the UN will also need to be further strengthened. As discussed above, the mission is well-positioned to coordinate and ensure continuity within the A3 and to facilitate greater collaboration between the AU and UN. As part of its institutional reform process, the AU has recognized the need to expand the capacity of this mission.⁴⁵ It now needs to follow up on this decision to ensure that the AU's position and priorities are promoted and continuously communicated to key actors in New York, including the UN Secretariat, the UN Security Council, and other member states.

The UN Office to the AU (UNOAU) also has an important role to play. Since its establishment in 2010 by the General Assembly, UNOAU has improved coordination and facilitated regular engagement between the AU Commission and the UN Secretariat on peace and security matters.⁴⁶ With the signing of the Joint UN-AU Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security in 2017, UNOAU consolidated its support to the partnership. The implementation of Resolution 2719 will have further implications for the office, and the UN Secretariat and UNOAU must have a shared understanding of its role. One UN official noted that there is gap between how the office is perceived in

42 African Union, "Outcome of The Consultative Meeting between the AU and UN Task Teams on UNSCR 2719," Addis Ababa, May 23–24, 2024.

43 UN General Assembly, *Composition of the Secretariat: Staff Demographics—Report of the Secretary-General*, UN Doc. A/78/569, November 10, 2023; written comments received July 23, 2024.

44 Interview no.15, AU official, April 18, 2024.

45 African Union, *Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on Follow-up Steps on the Common African Position on the Review of United Nations Peace Operations*, AU Doc. PSC/AHG/3.(DXLVII), September 26, 2015.

46 UN General Assembly, *Budget for the United Nations Office to the African Union—Report of the Secretary-General*, UN Doc. A/64/762, April 30, 2010. The UNOAU was established by consolidating the UN Liaison Office, the AU Peacekeeping Support Team, the UN planning team for AMISOM, and the Joint Support and Coordination Mechanism of UNAMID.

New York and the role it has assumed in Addis Ababa. UNOAU considers itself a critical player in leading the implementation of the resolution given its existing partnership and proximity to the AU and the kind of technical support it has provided to AU-led PSOs in the past. In New York, UNOAU is viewed more as a subsidiary entity.⁴⁷ Further clarity may be needed on reporting lines, specifically on how UNOAU will work with DPO, as it currently reports to DPPA. Between April and July 2024 DPPA, in collaboration with the DPO and DOS, has undertaken an independent strategic and civilian staffing review of UNOAU to recalibrate its priorities considering the deepening partnership with the AU. The review may indirectly provide UNOAU direction on the kind of role it can play in the implementation of Resolution 2719. As the resolution takes effect, UNOAU's role is likely to evolve.

Coordination between the AU and Subregional Organizations

With the growing prevalence of asymmetric warfare on the continent, there has been an increase in the number of forces deployed by regional economic communities (RECs) or regional mechanisms (RMs). The AU PSO doctrine encompasses not only AU-mandated missions but also mission authorized, endorsed, and recognized by the AU (see Box 2).⁴⁸

One of the options the AU outlined in its 2023 consensus paper is to finance subregional operations through UN assessed contributions as part of its efforts to support African-led missions with adequate and sustainable funding.⁴⁹

The relationship between the AU and RECs/RMs remains a critical pillar of the broader continental effort to maintain peace and security. There are existing mechanisms for consolidating the relationship between the AU and RECs/RMs, including the memorandum of understanding between the AU and RECs/RMs on the African Standby Force and the annual consultative meeting between the AU PSC and RECs/RMs. However, challenges around coordination persist.⁵⁰

RECs' lack of prior consultation with the AU PSC before deploying missions is one challenge that has been raised during the annual consultation.⁵¹ Most recently, the East African Community Regional Force (EACRF), Southern African Development Community (SADC) Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM), and SADC Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (SAMIDRC) were all brought to the AU PSC for consideration after their deployment. RECs/RMs mainly seek the AU PSC's endorsement to access financial and logistical support from the AU and UN.

Box 2. Categories of AU-led peace support operations

AU-led PSO: PSO that is mandated by the AU Assembly or PSC and directly commanded, controlled, and managed by the AU.

AU-authorized PSO: PSO that is authorized by the AU PSC, required to comply with AU PSC protocol and doctrine, and provided technical and material support by the AU but not directly commanded, controlled, and managed by the AU.

AU-endorsed PSO: PSO that is not mandated by the AU PSC or commanded, controlled, or managed by the AU, but the AUPSC receives periodic briefings from the mandating authority or the PSO.

AU-recognized PSO: PSO that is like an AU-endorsed PSO, with the AU PSC taking note of the decisions of the mandating authority when considering the conflict situation.

47 Interview no. 4, UN official, April 12, 2024.

48 Malte Brosig and John Karlsruff, "How Ad Hoc Coalitions Deinstitutionalize International Institutions," *International Affairs* 100, no. 2 (2024); African Union, "Doctrine on Peace Support Operations," 2021.

49 African Union, "Consensus Paper on Predictable, Adequate, and Sustainable Financing for African Union Peace and Security Activities."

50 The memorandum of understanding was adopted by the ministerial meeting of the 15th Specialized Technical Committee on Defense, Safety and Security on May 12, 2023 and welcomed by the 43rd Session of the Executive Council in July 2023.

51 African Union, *Joint Communiqué: 1st Joint Consultative Meeting between the Peace and Security Council of the AU and RECs/RMs for Conflict Prevention, Management, and Resolution*, AU Doc. PSC/RECs/RMs/1, May 24, 2019.

This reflects the lack of an adequate and shared understanding of the broader principles that should govern the relationship between the AU and RECs. RECs tend to base their conflict management role on the principle of subsidiarity, which they interpret as giving them, rather than the AU, the primary role in maintaining peace and security on the continent. This has limited the AU's role to providing political cover and management for peace support missions deployed by subregional actors without effective oversight.⁵²

Resolution 2719 includes a provision that AU-mandated and Security Council-authorized missions with access to UN assessed contributions must be under the direct and effective command and control of the AU. Thus, any subregional forces receiving assessed contributions under Resolution 2719 must operate under the management of the AU and adhere to its processes for deploying PSOs as well as its compliance and accountability frameworks. This requires the AU and RECs to clarify their division of labor and further standardize, institutionalize, and streamline their processes for mandating and coordinating the deployment of missions.

The AU and UN share a strong commitment to ensuring the success of the first case where Resolution 2719 is implemented, since it will inform the future joint authorization of missions.

Potential Test Cases

The AU and UN share a strong commitment to ensuring the success of the first case where Resolution 2719 is implemented, since it will inform the future joint authorization of missions. The AU anticipates triggering the resolution by August 2024, as per the decision of its Executive Council in February 2024.⁵³ Many are cautious about discussing specific cases, as the AU and UN are still working out the modalities of implementing Resolution 2719. Nonetheless, pressing security needs and expectations raised by the adoption of the resolution have spurred discus-

sions about potential test cases. These discussions are shaped by the shifting continental security landscape, including the mission drawdown in Somalia and the follow-on mission that is expected to take over in 2025, SADC's deployment of a regional force in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and the outbreak of armed conflict in Sudan.

Somalia

One of the potential test cases that has received attention is the post-ATMIS mission in Somalia. Despite the critical role played by AMISOM/ATMIS in the fight against al-Shabaab, the decision to withdraw the mission was driven primarily by financial considerations rather than the stabilization of the security situation in Somalia. Funding constraints have heavily impacted the capabilities of ATMIS. The AU has tried to cover the financial shortfall, including by tapping into the AU Peace Fund's crisis reserve facility, but this has proved insufficient.

To replace ATMIS, the Federal Government of Somalia has requested an AU PSC-mandated and UN Security Council-authorized mission "limited in mandate, size, and scope to deliver specific capabilities."⁵⁴ Noting concerns over the financial shortfalls experienced by ATMIS, the AU PSC has urged support for a post-ATMIS mission, potentially under the framework of Resolution 2719.⁵⁵ The expectation from the AU is that the follow-on mission would receive more financial support than AMISOM/ATMIS because this support would include troop allowances and compensation for death and disability.⁵⁶

One of the factors that makes the consideration of a potential new mission in Somalia distinct from when AMISOM first deployed is the level of involvement of the host government. There is

52 Amani Africa, "Beyond Subsidiarity: Understanding the Roles of the AU and RECs/RMs in Peace and Security in Africa," August 2023.

53 African Union, *Executive Council Decision on the Reports of the Sub-committees of the Permanent Representatives' Committee*, AU Doc. EX.CL/Dec.1233-1264(XLIV), February 14–15, 2024.

54 Federal Government of Somalia, "Strategic Planning for Post ATMIS: A Proposal from the Federal Government of Somalia," March 2024.

55 African Union, *PSC Communiqué on the Report of the African Union Commission on the Joint Strategic Assessment for the Post-ATMIS Security Arrangement for an AU-Led Mission in Somalia*, AU Doc. PSC/PR/COMM.1217, June 20, 2024.

56 Amani Africa, "Updated Briefing on Support for Somalia after the Withdrawal of ATMIS," May 2024.

strong host-state consent for the deployment of a follow-on mission, and the government is trying to ensure that the new mission is informed by the vision and objectives of Somalia's security plan. Although the government's initial proposal was for the post-ATMIS mission to provide security to key state installations while the Somali Security Forces lead the fight against al-Shabaab, this arrangement was later changed following the concept of operations developed by the AU in consultation with the government. The concept of operations envisages a new mission, the AU Support and Stabilisation Mission in Somalia (AUSSOM) with 11,911 personnel, including 11,146 military personnel, 680 police personnel, and 85 civilians.⁵⁷

However, there is no consensus among the permanent members of the Security Council and the current A3 members on whether the post-ATMIS mission will be able to access UN assessed contributions under the framework of Resolution 2719. The US has expressed reservations on the first case being a follow-on mission to an existing AU or UN mission. Given that the European Union has been a long-standing major donor to AMISOM and ATMIS, France has been adamant about sharing the burden of support to the mission in Somalia.

On August 15th, when extending the mandate of ATMIS until December 2024, the Security Council requested a comprehensive joint report by November 15th from the UN secretary-general and the AU Commission chair on the mission design of AUSSOM and financing options, including under Resolution 2719. The AU PSC's communiqué of August 1st specifically underscores the need for the new mission to access UN assessed contributions under the framework of Resolution 2719. The AU views Resolution 2719 and the financing of the new mission in Somalia as linked, while some permanent members of the Security Council and one African member insist on separating these two processes. The period leading up to the report will be critical in building consensus given the AU's concern over transitioning to a new mission with no predictable funding and some Security Council members expressing reservation over the

premature application of Resolution 2719.

With Somalia joining the Security Council as an elected member in 2025, there is likely to be a further push from within the council to finance AUSSOM through Resolution 2719. Considering Somalia's current security needs, it remains critical to identify the added value of the follow-on mission and how differently it would respond to the continued threat of al-Shabaab.⁵⁸

DRC

Deployed in December 2023, the SADC Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (SAMIDRC) is an AU-endorsed but not AU-mandated mission. Subregional actors have taken the lead in managing the conflict in the eastern DRC with limited direct involvement from the AU. Following the withdrawal of the East African Community Regional Force, SADC deployed SAMIDRC. However, it sought the endorsement of the AU PSC only after its troops were on the ground. Resource constraints continue to limit SAMIDRC's effectiveness.

When extending the mandate of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) in December 2023, the UN Security Council expressed "its intention to consider, upon clear and detailed request from the host country and the organization concerned, the conditions under which limited logistical and operational support may be provided by MONUSCO to an AU mandated regional force deployed within the area of MONUSCO's deployment."⁵⁹ To this end, the council requested a report from the secretary-general on possible UN support to regional forces in the DRC. While this request was not necessarily made under the framework of Resolution 2719, it indicates that the regional force should be mandated by the AU. Following this decision, the secretary-general has presented his report, outlining three options: (1) coordination, information sharing, and technical assistance limited to deconflicting MONUSCO's operations with

⁵⁷ Amani Africa, "Consideration of the Concept of Operations (CONOPs) of the AU-Led Mission in Somalia Post-African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS)," July 2024.

⁵⁸ Institute for Security Studies, "Will Resolution 2719 be a Game-Changer for ATMIS?" June 6, 2024.

⁵⁹ UN Security Council Resolution 2717, UN Doc. S/RES/2717, December 19, 2023.

SAMIDRC; (2) limited use of MONUSCO's logistical assets and capabilities to support SAMIDRC; and (3) more comprehensive UN support to SAMIDRC. When endorsing the SADC mission, the AU PSC requested the AU Commission to transmit the "communiqué to the United Nations Security Council for information and to request the Security Council to provide the required material and financial resources to enable SAMIDRC to effectively discharge its mandate."⁶⁰ As with the Security Council, the AU PSC's communiqué does not refer to Resolution 2719.

Although SAMIDRC is not an AU-mandated mission, the Security Council has authorized MONUSCO to support coordination, information sharing, and technical assistance to allow SAMIDRC to use its logistical assets and military capabilities. This arrangement does not fall within the parameters and conditions set under Resolution 2719. Rather, it provides an alternative mechanism for the Security Council to directly support a REC without requiring a mandate from the PSC or the direct command and control of the AU.⁶¹ While this presents a different arrangement for supporting a REC-led operation by the UN, there is little discussion on the sustainability of both the mission and the support provided by the UN through MONUSCO. On the one hand, the future of SAMIDRC may be impacted by domestic political developments in troop-contributing countries, namely South Africa, whose current coalition government includes an opposition party that has been critical of the mission's deployment in the DRC. Although this has not led to any immediate shift, these domestic political changes will shape South Africa's position and role in the regional mission in the longer term. The other aspect that requires further reflection is how MONUSCO can provide sustainable support to SAMIDRC in alignment with its disengagement plan.

The relationship between the AU and UN has impacted the effectiveness of past missions in achieving their mandates and in transitioning to UN missions.

Sudan

A new mission deployed in Sudan has also been considered as a potential test case. Sudan has a history of hosting AU missions, UN missions, and a hybrid UN-AU operations. With the deteriorating security situation after the outbreak of civil war in April 2023 and the limited results of efforts to reach a cease-fire agreement, there have been calls, particularly from Sudanese civil society actors, to deploy a mission to urgently protect civilians and address the humanitarian crisis.⁶² There are indications that some UN Security Council members may want to pursue this option under the framework of Resolution 2719.

However, unlike the DRC and Somalia, Sudan would need to see progress on mediation or greater political momentum around the deployment of a multilateral mission, particularly considering the difficulty of obtaining host-state consent. The Sudanese government has also had a complex relationship with peace operations in the past, as evidenced by the experiences of the UN-AU Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and the UN Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS). In the current context, a mission deployed to Sudan under Resolution 2719 would take a different form than the peace enforcement operations usually associated with the resolution. The case of Sudan presents an opportunity for both the AU and the UN to employ innovative tools that combine military elements and robust civil affairs components.

Lessons from Previous Cases and the Way Forward

The AU and UN have a long history of partnership on peace operations in Africa. These missions have employed various innovative models and tools to address the specific needs in different conflict

⁶⁰ African Union, *Communiqué of the 1203rd Meeting of the PSC Held on 4 March 2024, on Consideration of the Situation in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Deployment of the Southern African Development Community Mission in the DRC (SAMIDRC)*, AU Doc. PSC/PR/COMM.1203.2, March 4, 2024.

⁶¹ The other instance where the UN supported a subregional force was when the UN mission in Mali (MINUSMA) provided operational and logistical support to the G5 Sahel Joint Force, which was authorized by the AU PSC.

⁶² United Nations, "Citing Risk of Protection Vacuums for Women, Girls, Speakers Urge Security Council to Fully Integrate Gender Perspective into Peacekeeping Missions Transitions," UN Doc. SC/15786, August 7, 2024.

settings. Resolution 2719 opens a new phase in this partnership by requiring closer collaboration from the early stage of joint planning to the exit of a mission. However, the security landscape in Africa has significantly shifted since financing for AU-led PSOs was officially tabled on the agenda of the Security Council in 2007. This evolving environment must be considered when applying any lessons learned and best practices from previous operations to future operations deployed under Resolution 2719.

Previous and current UN-AU partnerships on peace operations highlight the varied roles different UN departments can play. For instance, DPO co-lead with the AU on UNAMID, while DOS is the primary department providing logistical support to AMISOM/ATMIS. These partnership models demonstrate that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to the joint planning and authorization of peace operations. Under Resolution 2719, DPO is now expected to play a greater role in coordinating between the AU Commission and UN Secretariat. Considering how much time has passed since its last collaboration with the AU on a joint mission, DPO needs to establish a new working arrangement with PSOD.

The relationship between the AU and UN has impacted the effectiveness of past missions in achieving their mandates and in transitioning to UN missions. For example, challenges were observed during the transition from UNAMID to UNITAMS. During this transition, the AU PSC emphasized the need to maintain the hybrid nature of the drawdown and the follow-on mechanism.⁶³ Beyond the difficulties emanating from the complex relationship with the host state, the UN and the AU did not have a shared vision of UNAMID's role and its follow-on mission. In Mali, the AU expressed its dissatisfaction with the UN's

lack of consultation during the transition from the African-Led Support Mission to Mali (AFISMA) to the UN mission in Mali (MINUSMA).⁶⁴ The AU's displeasure also emanated from the absence of a support package to AFISMA similar to what was provided to AMISOM.⁶⁵ These experiences underscore the need for more inclusive consultations, expectations management, and a standardized approach to selecting which missions are eligible to access UN assessed contributions.

The relationship between the AU and UN is even more important in the context of a hybrid operation, which is one option that was recommended in the AU consensus paper and the May 2023 secretary-general's report on AU PSOs authorized by Security Council. UNAMID presents valuable lessons, particularly related to the challenge of bringing together the "strategic visions, objectives, distinct cultures and working methods of two organizations."⁶⁷ In UNAMID, the joint special representative with dual reporting lines to both organizations faced difficulties. Beyond administrative and operational difficulties, some suggest that if such a case were to be replicated, the two organizations and the two councils would need to build mutual trust. This would require the meaningful participation of the A3 in decision-making processes to promote the AU's views in the UN Security Council.⁶⁷ The AU has echoed this sentiment, underscoring the importance of the full implementation of the resolution in "good faith, honoring the purpose and principles of the Charter."⁶⁸

AMISOM/ATMIS is the other main case of a strategic partnership between the AU and UN. One of the key challenges in that partnership has been the separation of the UN's political efforts, led by DPPA, and its operational support, led by DOS. This support was separated to navigate the specific

63 African Union, *Communiqué of the 913th PSC Meeting on the Situation in Darfur and the AU-UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) Transition*, AU Doc. PSC/PR/COMM.(CMXIII), March 3, 2020.

64 African Union, *Communiqué of the 371st PSC Meeting on the Situation in Mali*, AU Doc. PSC/PR/COMM.(CCCLXXI), April 25, 2013.

65 Arthur Boutellis and Paul D. Williams, "Disagreements over Mali Could Sour More Than the Upcoming African Union Celebration," IPI Global Observatory, May 15, 2013.

66 UN Security Council, *Summary Report on Lessons Learned from the Experience of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur*, UN Doc. S/2021/1099, December 29, 2021.

67 Interview no 4, UN official, April 12, 2024.

68 African Union, *Report of the Peace and Security Council on Its Activities and the State of Peace and Security in Africa, for the Period from February 2019 to February 2020*, AU Doc. Assembly/AU/5(XXXIII), February 17–18, 2024.

69 Eugene Chen, "Next Steps on the Financing of African Peace Support Operations: Unpacking Security Council Resolution 2719 (2023)," New York University Center on International Cooperation, February 2024.

security and political considerations in 2009 during the establishment of the UN Support Office for AMISOM (UNSOA), which was later transformed to UNSOS.⁶⁹ However, Resolution 2719 brings renewed expectations that political and operational efforts will be better linked and aligned as part of an overarching support architecture. If the PSC and UNSC agree to give the new mission in Somalia access to UN assessed contribution through the framework of Resolution 2719, the UN support will need to be guided by comprehensive efforts that integrate and better streamline political and operational support.

Conclusion

While the adoption of Resolution 2719 is an important step in consolidating the UN-AU partnership, aspects of the resolution that were left intentionally vague now require clarity. This is where much of the real work begins. As noted by one UN official, negotiators were “sprinting toward the finish line in December,” leaving a good amount of “constructive ambiguity within the resolution.”⁷⁰ These elements will now need to be resolved, and it is important that all aspects are fully clarified before policymakers attempt to implement the resolution in a first test case.

Not all policymakers are equally optimistic about the prospects for success, with one AU official noting, “We asked for a Mercedes Benz, and we were given a Volkswagen Beetle.”⁷¹ Nevertheless, all stakeholders expressed a strong desire and willingness to find effective solutions. To this end, the first test case will be critical, with policymakers emphasizing that a successful first attempt is imperative for the credibility of the broader initiative.

Discussions on the implementation of Resolution 2719 are fundamentally political. When council members adopted Resolution 2719, they recognized that some operational elements would require further negotiation but proceeded with the text they were able to agree on in the current

geopolitical climate. The council will ultimately decide on these operational details and on the initial test cases based on political considerations.

This means that the success of the resolution will rest on the council’s ability to overcome geopolitical divisions. It remains to be seen whether the council will overcome these divisions to give due consideration to the assessments of the AU Commission chairperson and UN secretary-general and the AU PSC’s decision on a specific case. The AU will also need to establish consensus among its member states to ensure support for the first test case.

While several processes are already underway to further clarify the resolution, the following recommendations should be considered to operationalize the resolution and strengthen its implementation:

Joint planning and coordination:

- **The UN Secretariat and AU Commission should finish and roll out joint planning guidelines and detailed modalities.** The guidelines should clarify what is required to trigger the initial planning process and specificities on joint planning, budgeting, reporting, and roles and responsibilities. All such specificities should be determined and agreed upon by both organizations prior to implementing the resolution.
- **The UN Security Council** should clarify the level and type of oversight it intends to maintain over AU-led PSOs initiated through Resolution 2719. It should ensure that measures for council oversight, such as reporting requirements, do not become unnecessarily burdensome on AU-led PSOs.
- **The UN Security Council and AU PSC should develop modalities for coordinating and making decisions on any potential AU-led PSO for which Security Council authorization and UN assessed funding are being sought.** In addition to strengthening formal council-to-council engagement, this may also

The success of the resolution will rest on the council’s ability to overcome geopolitical divisions.

⁷⁰ Interview no. 12, UN official, March 15, 2024.

⁷¹ Interview no. 8, AU official, March 25, 2024.

include new mechanisms to facilitate regular interaction at the expert level. This could be complemented by the establishment of joint meetings between the Security Council, the AU PSC, and T/PCCs for AU-led and UN Security Council–authorized missions to streamline oversight processes.

- **The AU and RECs need to further standardize, institutionalize, and streamline their processes for mandating and coordinating the deployment of missions.** This would help ensure that regional organizations complement each other at the continental level and when engaging the UN.
- **The work of the A3 should be guided by a clear strategy for engaging with the five permanent members and the other elected members of the UN Security Council.** In addition, the A3 will need to continue holding informal discussions with member states outside of the council, including through the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa. By enhancing the capacity of its permanent mission to the UN, the AU can ensure that its position and priorities are promoted and continuously communicated to key actors in New York and support the effort by the A3.

Burden sharing:


- **UN and AU member states, together with the EU and other donors, should discuss in greater detail how to cover the 25 percent funding gap,** balancing the call for the AU to shoulder some of the financial burden with AU member states’ reticence to pull from the AU Peace Fund. While funding modalities to cover the 25 percent gap will vary by context, member states should not wait until a mission is needed to map out viable solutions, as this could derail planning processes.
- **The UN Security Council should further clarify what is meant by its commitment to consider “all viable options”** if faced with a significant shortfall of funding, including whether this includes additional UN assessed contributions beyond the 75 percent cap.

Capacity building:

- **The AU should begin building the capacity of PSOD and the Permanent Observer Mission of the AU to the UN.** These institutions require more personnel to backstop missions under the AU’s command and control and to fulfill planning, oversight, and reporting requirements. Additional personnel could be seconded by AU member states or the UN, with a focus on personnel who have a strong understanding of AU-led PSOs and UN administrative regulations and rules.
- **The UN Secretariat may need to enhance the capacity of various departments.** Depending on the outcomes of the task force led by DPO, this could include greater rapid planning capacity within DPO and additional capabilities within UNOAU.

Regulations and rules:

- **The UN General Assembly, through the Fifth Committee and the Advisory Body on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, in coordination with the Department of Operational Support, should consider how to adapt UN regulations and rules to fit the needs of AU-led PSOs.** This includes consideration of AU-specific personnel- and contingent-owned equipment reimbursement systems and procurement processes that are designed to meet the needs of kinetic environments. The AU should be granted access to ACABQ and Fifth Committee meetings on AU operations that access UN assessed contributions.
- **The UN and AU should establish modalities for a joint budgeting process to be approved by the General Assembly.** This would allow the UN and AU to jointly present the mission budget to the General Assembly through the ACABQ and Fifth Committee. The UN should continue to provide technical support to AU-led PSOs in preparing and presenting mission budgets, either through the support office model, similar to Somalia, or by seconding UN personnel directly to AU-led missions.



The **INTERNATIONAL PEACE INSTITUTE** (IPI) is an independent, non-profit organization working to strengthen inclusive multilateralism for a more peaceful and sustainable planet. Through its research, convening, and strategic advising, IPI provides innovative recommendations for the United Nations System, member states, regional organizations, civil society, and the private sector. With staff from around the world and a broad range of academic fields, IPI has offices facing United Nations headquarters in New York and an office in Manama.

www.ipinst.org

www.theglobalobservatory.org



777 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017-3521
USA
TEL +1-212-687-4300
FAX +1-212-983-8246

51-52 Harbour House
Bahrain Financial Harbour
P.O. Box 1467
Manama, Bahrain
TEL +973-1721-1344