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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. P.O. Box: 3243 Tel.: (251-11) 5513 822 Fax: (251-11) 5519 321
Email: situationroom@africa-union.org

**PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL**
**1208TH MEETING**

**16 APRIL 2024**
**ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**

**PSC/PR/COMM.1208 (2024)**

# COMMUNIQUÉ

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**Adopted by the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) at its 1208th meeting held on 16 April 2024, on the Joint Briefing by the Committee of Intelligence and Security Services of Africa (CISSA), the African Center for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT) and the African Union Mechanism for Police Cooperation (AFRIPOL) on unblocking obstacles to effective Continental Early Warning System (CEWS)**

**The Peace and Security Council,**

***Recalling*** all its previous decisions and pronouncements on Continental Early Warning and Security Outlook and related themes, particularly Communiqués [PSC/PR/COMM.1170 (2023)] adopted at its 1170th meeting held on 22 August 2023 and [PSC/PR/COMM.1138 (2023)] adopted at its 1138th meeting held on 8 February 2023;

***Deeply concerned*** by the growing threat to peace, security, and stability in Africa posed by the spread of transnational organised crime, terrorism and violent extremism, and emergent crimes, as well as man-made and natural disasters throughout the Continent;

**Determined** to ensure the successful implementation of the AU Master Roadmap of Practical Steps for Silencing the Guns by 2030 and actualisation of Aspiration 4 of AU Agenda 2063;

***Committed*** to enhancing capacity to address the scourge of conflict, terrorism and violent extremism, as well as to the full implementation of Article 12 of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union on the establishment and operationalisation of the Continental Early Warning System;

***Noting*** the opening remarks by H.E. Ambassador Jainaba Jagne, Permanent Representative of the Republic of The Gambia to the AU and the stand-in Chairperson of the PSC for April 2024 and the statement by H.E. Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, Commissioner for Political Affairs Peace and Security; ***also noting*** the briefing by Acting Executive Secretary for the CISSA and the representatives of ACSRT and AFRIPOL;

**Acting under Article 7 of its Protocol, the Peace and Security Council:**

1. ***Commends*** the efforts deployed by the AU and its Member States in addressing the peace and security challenges in the continent and ***calls*** for redoubled efforts by the AU and the Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs) to continue deploying timely actions and providing support to countries in conflicts and those in political transition, as well as to provide support to countries holding elections;

2. ***Notes, with appreciation***, the collaborative efforts of ACSRT, AFRIPOL and CISSA, and their continued support to Member States in promptly identifying potential conflict triggers for the betterment of peace and security across the continent; and ***welcomes*** the renaming of the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT) to the African Union Counterterrorism Centre (AUCTC);

3. ***Underscores*** the imperative of a robust and fully functional Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) to effectively pre-empt and mitigate conflicts and ***calls for*** further enhanced inter-agency collaboration, technological advancement, capacity building, and increased political engagement and advocacy aimed at fostering a cohesive CEWS;



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4. ***Expresses concern*** about the challenge of persistent culture of denialism by concerned AU Member States and RECs/REMs regarding credible early warning reports of looming crisis or potential conflict; ***encourages*** AU Member States and RECs/RMs to reaffirm their commitment to a collective approach to strengthen and fully implement CEWS, recognising its pivotal role in ensuring the continent's security and stability; ***further encourages*** Member States to extend their cooperation with the AU Panel of the Wise in their preventive diplomacy efforts in order to prevent and de-escalate potential conflicts on the Continent;

5. ***Highlights*** the urgent need for coordination and harmonisation of efforts on early warning amongst the AU Commission, AU organs and RECs/RMs to ensure operational efficiency and prevention of conflict on the continent; ***encourages*** Member States to continue investing in capacity-building efforts, including further enhancing their national early warning systems, as well as in the critical capacities of national law enforcement, defense, and security institutions to facilitate early detection and ensuring robust responses to security threats;

6. ***Underscores*** the importance of sharing and promoting best practices in the protection of communities, particularly the youth and women, against radicalisation that leads to terrorism and violent extremism;

7. ***Highlights*** the imperative of holistically addressing the root causes and structural drivers of terrorism and violent extremism and the need to develop mechanisms of mitigating exogenous factors exacerbating conflict on the Continent, including the influx of mercenaries and foreign fighters, as well as the increasing use of self-defence militias;

8. ***Reiterates the call for*** the expeditious operationalisation of the PSC Sub-Committee on Counterterrorism; in this regard, ***tasks*** the AU Commission to develop the terms of reference for the Sub-Committee and report back to Council by the end of June 2024;

9. ***Further reiterates the call for*** the expeditious strategic review of the African Standby Force (ASF) as decided by the 16th Specialised Technical Committee on Defence, Safety and Security (STCDSS) to ensure operationalisation and rapid deployment in Member States and regions battling the scourge of terrorism;

10. ***Underscores*** the need for further enhancing the capacity of the deployed troops on the detection and dismantling of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and the possible disruption of such technology of the terrorist groups;

11. To unblock obstacles and ensure effective early warning and response, ***requests*** the Commission, in collaboration with ACSRT, AFRIPOL and CISSA, as may be relevant, to undertake the following and report to the Council before the end of the year 2024:

i. Hasten the ongoing AUC institutional reforms to enhance the utility of the CEWS in PSC decision-making processes as one of the pillars of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA);

ii. Optimally utilise the Panel of the Wise and AU Inter-Regional Knowledge Exchange on Early Waring and Conflict Prevention (I-RECKE) to bridge the gap between early warning, response and timely action;

iii. Facilitate the coordination of early warning information flow, as well as complementarity and synergy of CEWS, ACSRT and AFRIPOL, as well as sharing of intelligence by CISSA to enhance operational efficiency;

iv. Invest in technological innovations to enhance CEWS' capabilities and spearhead the development of bespoke technological solutions to contribute towards facilitating early actions;

v. Recognising the rapid technological advancements and the need for CEWS to leverage such technologies to improve its predictive accuracy and analytical depth, spearhead the expansion of training programs in advanced data analytics, cyber security, and the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning and Digital Learning;

vi. Ensure the CEWS, ACSRT and AFRIPOL are adequately resourced and funded for them to effectively discharge their mandates; in this regard, consider mobilising funding from diverse sources such as partners and the private sector;

vii. Monitor, track and ensure the implementation of previous decisions of the Council on Continental Early Warning and Security Outlook, including the quarterly briefing by ACSRT, AFRIPOL and CISSA, and the elaboration of the trigger mechanism and indicators to facilitate the Council's timely response to early warning;

viii. Within available resources, organise in-house training for Member States and RECs/RMs on early warning, data mining, information flow and report writing, and the ongoing institutional reforms;

ix. Timely disseminate daily, weekly and monthly early warning reports to Member States; and

x. Creates avenues for Member States to embrace the Continental Structural Conflict Prevention Framework to address the root causes of violent conflict before its manifestation.

12. ***Welcomes*** the successful completion of the first phase of Cyber Security course conducted from 17 to 23 March 2024 by CISSA in Gaborone, Botswana, in fulfilment of PSC decision [PSC/PR/COMM.1148 (2023)];

13. ***Requests*** the AU Commission to redouble its efforts in providing political and security support to countries in political transition, including through establishing a Transitional Support Group and using existing mechanisms, such as the Nouakchott and Djibouti Processes as well as the Accra Initiative, to accompany their return to constitutional order and their efforts in addressing terrorism and violent extremism;

14. ***Reiterates its request*** to ACSRT to undertake a study on youth indoctrination and on the prevention of the risks of radicalisation and violent extremism among young people, and in this regard, ***directs*** the ACSRT to factor in an assessment on addressing psychological warfare and propaganda as one of the ways to prevent terrorism on the Continent;

15. ***Further requests*** the Commission to regularise the periodic interaction between the Chairperson of the AU Commission and the Council to streamline timely responses to early warning; and

16. ***Decides*** to remain actively seized of the matter.