

Draft Concept Note on

Experts and Stakeholders' Workshop

On the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region

Hosted jointly by the African Union and the United Nations, under the auspices of the PSC Framework Guarantors

26-27 February 2018

African Union Headquarters, Addis Ababa

I. Rationale

On 24 February 2013, eleven countries signed the Peace, Security and Cooperation (PSC) Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and the region in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.¹ The PSC Framework aims at breaking the recurring cycles of violence in the eastern DRC and ensuring that sustainable peace takes hold. To this end, the PSC Framework sets out a number of commitments for the DRC, the region and the international community. The United Nations (UN), the African Union (AU), the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) act as Guarantor institutions charged with monitoring and supporting its implementation.

Since the signing of the PSC Framework five years ago, encouraging progress has been made in several areas. Yet, there is still a long way to go to realize the ambitious commitments contained in the PSC Framework. The DRC and the wider region continue to grapple with threats posed by non-state armed groups. Political crises around electoral processes have erupted in a number of countries, drawing attention away from the implementation of outstanding commitments under the PSC Framework. Other factors contributing to persistent instability include: weak state institutions; unregulated exploitation of natural resources; youth unemployment; and massive displacements of people. In addition, bilateral relations have repeatedly come under strain. All this suggests that the root causes of conflict in the Great Lakes region have not been fully addressed. Strong political will, ownership by key stakeholders and adequate financial support continue to be required in order to advance the implementation of the PSC Framework commitments.

The upcoming five-year anniversary of the PSC Framework on 24 February 2018 provides an opportunity to reflect on the progress, challenges and shortcomings in its implementation. The African Union and the United Nations therefore propose to convene an experts and stakeholders' workshop – under the auspices of the PSC Framework Guarantors – to assess the implementation of commitments under the PSC Framework and to formulate concrete

¹ The initial signatories include: Angola, Burundi, the Central African Republic, the Republic of Congo, the DRC, Rwanda, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. In 2014, Kenya and Sudan became the 12th and 13th signatories to the PSC Framework respectively.

recommendations on how to generate renewed momentum and promote greater ownership by key stakeholders.

It should be recalled that on 7 November 2017, the AU Peace and Security Council reaffirmed its commitment to the PSC Framework and called upon the stakeholders and the Guarantors of the PSC Framework to take the necessary steps and redouble their efforts in order to ensure the effective implementation of all of its aspects.

The outcome of the workshop will also feed into consultations to be carried out in response to Security Council resolution 2389 (2017), which was adopted on 8 December 2017. In operative paragraph 24 of the resolution, the UN Security Council invited the Secretary-General “to engage in high-level dialogue, in collaboration with the AU, with the signatory states and Guarantor institutions of the PSC Framework, as well as key regional and international partners, to assess the progress, challenges and shortcomings in the implementation of the PSC Framework, and to present his vision, supported by concrete recommendations, to the Council in his next report, which would mark the fifth anniversary of the signing of the PSC Framework.”

II. Themes to explore

Status of implementation of national, regional and international commitments

The workshop will review the efforts undertaken by the signatory countries, the Guarantors and the international community to follow through on their commitments under the PSC Framework. It will offer an opportunity to assess factors of success and achievements made, including through the governance mechanisms of the PSC Framework, namely the Technical Support Committee and the Regional Oversight Mechanism.

Factors impeding the implementation of the PSC Framework commitments

The workshop will furthermore provide a platform for discussing the main challenges in implementing the commitments and in mobilizing stakeholders at different levels. Discussions will also focus on structural and recurring factors (such as the threats posed by negative forces and continued mistrust among key stakeholders) as well as unforeseen factors that have adversely impacted on the implementation process, and how they could be surmounted.

Suggestions for renewing the momentum and promoting greater ownership

Finally, the workshop will include a brainstorming session on options for reinvigorating the signatory countries’ commitment to the PSC Framework, promoting greater ownership and enhancing cooperation between stakeholders in the region to advance the implementation process. It will also encourage participants to make concrete recommendations on how best to address the underlying root causes of conflicts in the Great Lakes region.

III. Methodology

The workshop will consist of several sessions that address the various structural and thematic aspects of the PSC Framework. To set the scene, the workshop will kick off with a

general overview of the different national, regional and international commitments, and invite representatives from grassroots organizations to share their views on the perceived achievements and challenges encountered over the past five years. The second session will be dedicated to reviewing the PSC Framework's governance mechanisms, the effectiveness of existing monitoring and evaluation tools as well as recent reform efforts. Sessions three and four will take a thematic approach by spotlighting progress, challenges and shortcomings in implementing the political, security, socio-economic and rule of law related goals included in the PSC Framework and Regional Plan of Action. Related thereto, session five will look at international commitments, the role of existing partnerships and the status and effectiveness of resource mobilization. Finally, the last session will look ahead and provide participants with an opportunity to formulate concrete recommendations on the way forward and exchange ideas on a common vision for the region.

IV. Objectives and outcome

The objectives of the proposed workshop are threefold:

- Discussing the progress made in the implementation of the PSC Framework, including major achievements and factors of success;
- Taking stock of and reaching a shared understanding of the persistent challenges and shortcomings impacting on the PSC Framework's implementation;
- Identifying concrete recommendations on how to create renewed momentum for the implementation process.

The outcome of the workshop will be a summary report by the co-hosts. Furthermore, the overall conclusions and insights drawn from the discussions will feed into the consultations to be carried out on progress, challenges and shortcomings in the implementation of the PSC Framework, as called for in Security Council resolution 2389 (2017).

V. Format and participants

The workshop will stretch over one and a half days and be held in a closed-door, off-the-record setting under Chatham House rules to allow for an open, frank and constructive exchange of views. The workshop will bring together representatives of the thirteen signatory countries and Guarantors of the Framework Agreement (AU, UN, ICGLR and SADC) as well as the institutions and partner States mentioned in the Framework Agreement (Belgium, United States, France, United Kingdom, European Union). In order to promote a richer and broader debate, the other permanent members of the UN Security Council, representatives of the AU Peace and Security Council, as well as civil society actors and some experts selected for their competence will also be invited to this workshop.

VI. Dates and venue

The workshop will be held on 26-27 February 2018 at AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa.