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Department of Political Affairs - Security Council Affairs Division
Security Council Practices and Charter Research Branch

Peace and security in Africa

Overview

During 2010 and 2011, the Security Council held seven meetings concerning “Peace and security in Africa”, and adopted two resolutions and one presidential statement. Issues discussed during the period under review included (i) Djibouti and the Horn of Africa, including Eritrea; (ii) African Union peacekeeping and strategic partnerships with the United Nations; (iii) piracy in the Gulf of Guinea and iv) Libya.¹

A table lists the meetings held in consideration of this item, as well as related information, including invitees, speakers and decisions adopted.

19 May 2010 to 5 December 2011: Djibouti and the Horn of Africa

On 19 May 2010, the Council heard a briefing by the President of the Republic of Djibouti on several issues pertaining to the Horn of Africa, including the border dispute between Djibouti and Eritrea. He warned that unless greater attention was paid to the Horn of Africa, the breakdown of law and order, the conflict in Somalia and the

¹ Until 17 March 2011, the Council considered developments in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya at the 6686th, 6490th and 6491st meetings under the agenda item “Peace and security in Africa”. Pursuant to a note of the Security Council dated 16 March 2011 ([S/2011/141](#)), the Council decided to subsume its earlier consideration of developments in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya at the above-mentioned three meetings under the new item “The situation in Libya”. Meetings held, and decisions adopted in connection with Libya under the item entitled “Peace and Security in Africa” are featured in sect. 16 of the present part, under the new item entitled “the situation in Libya”.

destabilizing actions of Eritrea, might lead to further problems for the region. Council members commended Djibouti's efforts to restore peace and anti-piracy efforts in Somalia and its implementation of Council resolutions, and urged Eritrea to fulfil its obligations under [resolution 1907 \(2009\)](#) with respect to the border dispute with Djibouti.² While emphasizing the importance of dialogue, many speakers warned that any person or entity attempting to undermine the peace process, disrupt humanitarian deliveries or provide support to insurgents risked facing sanctions. In reference to the imposition of targeted sanctions against Eritrea, the Russian Federation noted that they must be accompanied by reliable evidence of the involvement of specific individuals in unlawful acts.³

On 20 July 2010, the Council heard a briefing from the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, who commended recent steps taken by the Governments of Eritrea and Djibouti in negotiating a settlement, with the active mediation efforts of Qatar. He further urged all parties to facilitate the work of the newly re-established Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea⁴, in reporting on Eritrea's compliance with [resolution 1907 \(2009\)](#).⁵ The representative of Eritrea stated that the agreement signed under the leadership of Qatar was a significant development, notwithstanding that [resolution 1907 \(2009\)](#) was otherwise unjustly and selectively imposed on Eritrea. In light of the steps taken by Eritrea, he appealed to the Council to lift the sanctions.⁶ The representative of Djibouti credited [resolution 1907 \(2009\)](#) and the measures imposed by it for the recent progress and expressed hope that the negotiations under the leadership of Qatar would soon lead to a peaceful and lasting resolution of the conflict.⁷

² [S/PV.6316](#).

³ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁴ The Monitoring Group for Somalia and Eritrea was established pursuant to [resolution 1853 \(2008\)](#), and on 19 March 2010 the Council adopted [resolution 1916 \(2010\)](#), thereby re-establishing the Monitoring Group for a further 12 months. For more related information, see part VII, sect. III. A. with regard to decisions adopted in accordance with Article 41 of the Charter.

⁵ [S/PV.6362](#), p. 3.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

On 5 December 2011, the Council met with the States of the Horn of Africa and other members of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development via teleconference – in particular Djibouti, Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda – who expressed concern about Eritrea’s destabilizing activities in the sub-region.⁸ Many speakers pointed out that despite the appeals of the international community and the African Union, Eritrea had failed to comply with or implement [resolution 1907 \(2009\)](#). In particular, the Council’s attention was drawn to the potential use of Eritrea’s mining sector as a financial source in destabilizing the East African region, as well as its alleged support for armed opposition and terrorism groups and its practice of extorting funds from its Diaspora.

At the same meeting, the Council voted to impose stronger measures against Eritrea, through the adoption of [resolution 2023 \(2011\)](#) under Chapter VII of the Charter, by a vote of 13 in favour to none against, with 2 abstentions (China, Russian Federation).⁹ Building on [resolution 1907 \(2009\)](#), the Council, inter alia, demanded that Eritrea cease all direct or indirect efforts to destabilize States, as well as release information on the status of Djiboutian combatants missing in action since 2008. It further called on States to exercise vigilance in business dealings with Eritrea’s mining sector, and requested the Sanctions Committee concerning Somalia and Eritrea to draft due diligence guidelines to that end.

22 October 2010 to 21 June 2011: support to African Union peacekeeping

On 22 October 2010, the Council held an open debate in connection with support to African Union peacekeeping operations authorized by the United Nations.¹⁰ Presenting his report¹¹ on support to African Union peacekeeping operations authorized by the United Nations, the Secretary-General stated that the work of regional organizations under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations was indispensable. He commended the African Union and subregional organizations in their efforts to prevent, mediate and resolve conflicts on the continent. However, recognizing that while building

⁸ [S/PV.6674](#).

⁹ [S/PV.6674 \(Resumption 1\)](#).

¹⁰ For information on the role of regional organizations in peace and security, see part VIII.

¹¹ [S/2010/514](#).

capacity was important, he stated that the efforts of the African Union to effectively deploy peacekeeping operations were hampered by the lack of sustainable, predictable financing, and that African-led peacekeeping operations ought to receive the same support as other United Nations operations.¹² The Council also heard a briefing by the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, who similarly welcomed the progress made in strengthening the strategic partnership between the United Nations and the African Union, whilst also calling for further progress towards finding a lasting solution for sustainable and predictable funding for African-led operations.¹³

The Council adopted a presidential statement in which it, inter alia, reaffirmed the importance of, and its commitment to, strengthening its partnership with the African Union Peace and Security Council, consistent with Chapter VIII of the Charter, through reviewing the degree of cooperation between them with regard to conflict prevention, resolution, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, including the maintenance of constitutional order and the promotion of human rights, democracy and the rule of law in Africa. It further expressed its determination to continue working towards a more predictable and sustainable solution to the funding challenges.¹⁴

On 21 June 2011, the Council heard a briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU)¹⁵ on efforts underway to broaden the strategic partnership between the United Nations and the African Union on a range of shared issues, including peacekeeping and peacebuilding. In his address to the Council, he reported that the Office, with the support of the United Nations Department of Field Support, was making a solid transition to a lean and self-sufficient operation. He went on to describe measures undertaken by the Office to improve coordination of peace and security initiatives between the African Union and the United Nations, particularly in Somalia and Darfur. He also stressed that although it was a recognised fact that conflict mediation was a challenging business,

¹² [S/PV.6409](#), pp. 3-4.

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 5-7.

¹⁴ [S/PRST/2010/21](#).

¹⁵ The Office was created by the General Assembly in 2010 and integrates all activities of the former United Nations Liaison Office, the former African Union Peacekeeping Support Team and the former United Nations Planning Team for the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

particularly when faced by a multiplicity of actors, it was important to continue to cooperate and speak in one voice when addressing crises. Consequently, a key objective of the Office was to strengthen coordination within African Union institutions and enhance their capacity to deliver peace.¹⁶

Speakers welcomed the growing partnership between the United Nations and the African Union, and stressed that bolstering the relationship further would lead to tangible benefits in Africa and beyond, with several speakers highlighting important work being carried out by the African Union in guiding the United Nations peacekeeping troops in Africa. Speakers also underscored the need to strengthen cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations with respect to preventive diplomacy and the promotion of human rights and the rule of law. The representative for Nigeria warned that it was important to acknowledge that, while regional bodies like the African Union had the necessary will, they were often insufficiently resourced to undertake long-term peacekeeping missions. Consequently, she stressed, the deployment of expert civilian personnel was central to the partnership, and may lead to a more systematic, less reactive approach to joint peacekeeping operations.¹⁷ India underscored that, as 75 percent of the Council's time was spent on African issues, it was important for it to hear Africa's views, so that its action was not only based on what it believed to be Africa's needs, but also on the knowledge of the action of African countries themselves.¹⁸

31 October 2011: Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea

On 31 October 2011, the Council held an open meeting at which it unanimously adopted [resolution 2018 \(2011\)](#), condemning all acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea committed off the coast of the States of the Gulf of Guinea. It further called upon States of the Economic Community of West African States, Economic Community of Central African States, and Gulf of Guinea Commission, as well as victim and perpetrating States, to cooperate in the prosecution of alleged perpetrators, including facilitators and

¹⁶ [S/PV.6561](#), pp. 2-3.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

financiers. The Council also welcomed the intention of the Secretary-General to deploy a United Nations assessment mission to examine the threat and recommend options on addressing the problem.¹⁹

¹⁹ [S/PV.6645](#).

Meetings: peace and security in Africa^a

<i>Meeting and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
Djibouti and the Horn of Africa						
6316 19 May 2010			Djibouti ^b		All Council members and all invitees	
6362 20 July 2010	Report of the Secretary-General on Eritrea (S/2010/327) Letter dated 12 July 2010 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea to the President of the Security Council (S/2010/372)	Letter dated 7 June 2010 from Qatar transmitting an agreement between Eritrea and Djibouti (S/2010/291 , enclosure) Letter dated 30 June 2010 from Eritrea concerning the report of the Secretary-General on Eritrea (S/2010/350)	Djibouti, Eritrea and Somalia	Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs	Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Eritrea and Djibouti	
6674 5 December 2011		Draft resolution submitted by Gabon and Nigeria (S/2011/744)	Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Uganda ^c		10 Council members, ^d Djibouti, Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda	Resolution 2023 (2011) 13-0-2 ^e
African Union and United Nations Partnerships						
6409 22 October 2010	Report of the Secretary-General on support to African Union peacekeeping operations authorized by the United Nations (S/2010/514)		Algeria, Australia, Ethiopia, Finland, Kenya, Portugal, South Africa, Sudan	Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, Acting Head of the European Union delegation	The Secretary-General, all Council members and all invitees ^f	S/PRST/2010/21
6561 21 June 2011	Briefing by the United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU)			Head of the United Nations Office to the African Union	Head of the United Nations Office to the African Union	

<i>Meeting and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
					and all Council members	
Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea						
6633 19 October 2011	Letter dated 17 October 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2011/644)		Benin	Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security of the Economic Community of West African States, Deputy Executive Secretary for Political Affairs of the Gulf of Guinea Commission	The Secretary-General, all Council members and all invitees	
6645 31 October 2011		Draft resolution submitted by France, Gabon, Germany, India, Lebanon, Nigeria, Portugal, South Africa, United Kingdom and United States (S/2011/673)				Resolution 2018 (2011) 15-0-0

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^b Djibouti was represented by its President.

^c Djibouti and Somalia were represented by their respective Presidents; the representative of Ethiopia spoke in his capacity both as Prime Minister of his country and also as the Chairperson of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD); Kenya was represented by its Minister for Foreign Affairs; and Uganda by its representative to the African Union. All appeared via video-teleconference from Addis Ababa.

^d China, France, Gabon, Germany, Lebanon, Nigeria, Russian Federation, South Africa, United Kingdom, and United States.

^e For: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Colombia, France, Gabon, Germany, India, Lebanon, Nigeria, Portugal, South Africa, United Kingdom, United States; abstaining: China, Russian Federation.

^f Uganda was represented by its First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for East African Community Affairs. Nigeria and Somalia were both represented by their respective Ministers for Foreign Affairs.