



# Security Council

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Security Council  
6561<sup>st</sup> Meeting (PM)

### **HEAD OF NEW UNITED NATIONS OFFICE TO AFRICAN UNION BRIEFS SECURITY COUNCIL**

### **ON EFFORTS TO BROADEN STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN TWO ORGANIZATIONS**

#### **Making First Appearance before Council as Special Representative, Says Office Making Progress in Transition to Self-Sufficient Operation Based in Addis Ababa**

The head of the year-old United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU) briefed the Security Council today on efforts under way to broaden the strategic partnership between the two organizations on a range of shared issues, including on peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding, and on raising the world body's profile as a vital partner for capacity-building with African regional entities.

In his first address to the Council, UNOAU chief Zachary Muburi-Muita said he was very pleased to report that, with the active involvement of the Department of Field Support, his Office was making solid progress in its transition towards a "new, lean, self-sufficient operation" based in Addis Ababa. He added that, by 31 July, it would have recruited 61 of its authorized 63 staff members.

Since his arrival eight months ago, he had intensified strategic-level consultations with the African Union on responding to challenges on long-standing peace efforts, including in Somalia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire and Central African Republic, as well as on recent developments in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya. UNOAU was also focused on enhancing cooperation, strengthening common understanding and maximizing comparative advantages on United Nations-African Union joint peace activities, including the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

"Our experience on cooperation between the two organizations shows that we do better in addressing crises on the continent when we stand together and speak in one voice," he said. At the same time, no one knew better than Security Council members that conflict mediation was a "challenging business, particularly when we are faced with a multiplicity of actors, initiatives and organizations playing their respective roles". That was why one of the key objectives of the UNOAU was to strengthen coordination with African Union institutions and enhance their capacity to deliver peace on the continent.

On the overall strategic relationship between the United Nations and the African Union, he said that, while much had been accomplished, the full potential of such cooperation had yet to be tapped. Helping the African Union strengthen its capacities to play an ever-more effective role in addressing peace and security issues in Africa was an objective that everyone shared, and the basic reason the UNOAU had been created. In that light, he believed that UNOAU activities would greatly help the United Nations Secretariat improve its own effectiveness so that better strategic planning, analysis and coordination with other informal partners could enlighten political decision-making and pave the way for more effective political coordination between the two organizations.

When Council members took the floor, they all 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. Several speakers highlighted the important work being carried out

by the African Union Peace and Security Council in guiding the work of United Nations peacekeeping operations in Africa.

India's representative underscored that, as 75 per cent of the Council's time was spent on African issues, it was important for the 15-nation body 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.

Sounding a note of concern, the representative of Nigeria said it was important to acknowledge that, while regional bodies like the African Union had the political will, they were insufficiently resourced to undertake long-term peacekeeping operations. All too frequently, African Union members would muster sufficient numbers of peacekeepers, but have their efforts would be undermined by the lack of resources.

Today's armed conflicts required nuanced, heightened responses, she continued, and stressed that more support did not create dependency. Indeed, a strengthened partnership and cooperation in deploying expert civilian personnel was central to that partnership. The opening of UNOAU was a step in the right direction and she hoped it would lead to a more systematic, less reactive approach to joint peacekeeping operations.

Also speaking were the representatives of South Africa, China, France, Brazil, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Germany, United States, Colombia, United Kingdom, Lebanon, Portugal, Russian Federation and Gabon.

The meeting began at 12:01 p.m. and ended at 1:25 p.m.

#### Background

The Security Council met today to consider matters related to peace and security in Africa and was expected to hear a briefing from the head of the United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU).

#### Briefing

ZACHARY MUBURI-MUITA, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Office to the African Union, said the Office's establishment had been a key part of the collective effort to enhance the strategic partnership of both organizations on peace and security issues, and to provide coordinated and coherent United Nations support to the African Union on both short-term operational and planning matters and long-term capacity-building.

Updating the Council on the recent activities of his Office, he was very pleased to report that, with the active involvement of the Department of Field Support, the Office had made significant steps towards completion of streamlining its activities from three formerly separate offices reporting to three different departments at Headquarters. It was transitioning towards a "new, lean, self-sufficient operation" based in Addis Ababa, and he added that, by 31 July, it would have recruited 61 of its authorized 63 staff members.

In support efforts where efficiency gains could be seen, and to fill gaps in its own support structure, UNOAU had signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), allowing his Office to tap into the Commission's existing common services and take advantage of adequate office space in the Commission's new headquarters in Addis. He went on to say that, since his arrival, he had intensified strategic-level consultations with the African Union on responding to challenges on long-standing peace efforts, including in Somalia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire and Central African Republic, as well as on recent developments in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya.

He said that, at the strategic level, UNOAU was focused on enhancing cooperation, strengthening common understanding and maximizing comparative advantages on United Nations-African Union joint peace activities. "Our experience on cooperation between the two organizations shows that we do better in addressing crises on the continent when we stand together and speak in one voice," he said. At the same time, no one knew better than Security Council members that conflict mediation was a "challenging

business, particularly when we are faced with a multiplicity of actors, initiatives and organizations playing their respective roles". That was why one of the key objectives of the UNOAU was to strengthen coordination with African Union institutions and enhance their capacity to deliver peace on the continent.

Continuing, he said that his regular participation in meetings of the African Union Peace and Security Council on country-specific situations and recent developments had proved to be instrumental in coordinating relevant action. In addition, building on two United Nations-African Union workshops on collective peace efforts in Somalia and Guinea-Bissau, the United Nations Secretariat and the African Union Commission had agreed on joint mediation partnership guidelines. Those guidelines would be endorsed and launched by the third United Nations-African Union Joint Task Force on Peace and Security, to be held in New York in September.

At the working level, he said that, while there were many imperatives for short-term support which must be responded to cooperatively, the UNOAU had made it a priority for all its planners to make tangible progress in helping the African Union assess its needs in their areas of expertise; in designing appropriate strategies aligned to African Union priorities; and in implementing such strategies. Far too often, capacity-building efforts got bogged down in helping counterparts meet urgent day-to-day needs and, therefore, achieved little in terms of strengthened capacity. "We want to avoid this pattern so that we can achieve our common goal of helping the African Union Commission to be fully capable of planning and executing its own peace support missions," he said, adding that all must accept that institutional capacity-building was a long-term goal.

He went on to say that the UNOAU would play a lead role in multi-partner coordination regarding the African 10-year capacity-building programme. It would also continue to establish partnerships outside the United Nations, such as the African Union Partner's Group, which met regularly. The UNOAU would also engage with organizations that could bring other resources to the table, for example, the World Bank had expressed keen interest in partnering with the Office on support for the African Union in the area of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. He also highlighted ongoing support to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), including assisting that operation with the smooth integration of newly authorized troops, and helping AMISOM review, update and develop strategic and operational documents.

On the overall strategic relationship between the two organizations, he said that much had been achieved, but the full potential of such cooperation had yet to be achieved. Helping the African Union strengthen its capacities so that it could play an ever-more effective role in addressing peace and security issues in Africa was an objective that everyone shared and was the basic reason the UNOAU had been created. "I firmly believe that the various activities of my office will greatly strengthen the foundation for this relationship by helping the Secretariat improve its own effectiveness so that better strategic planning, better analysis and better coordination with other informal partners can inform political decision-making and pave the way for more effective political coordination between the two organizations," he said.

### Statements

DOCTOR MASHABANE ( South Africa) said the integrated, advanced presence of the United Nations in the African Union was a testament to their increased partnership. The presence of the UNOAU should contribute to the effective implementation of the 10-year capacity-building programme and it must further enhance the African Union's capacity to support and manage peacekeeping operations. He called on the Special Representative to bolster support for the African peace and security architecture, including development of an early warning system. It was important for the United Nations to be represented at an appropriate level, taking into account the increased level of integration of the African Union. He looked forward to the Secretary-General's report on his strategic vision of partnership between the United Nations and the African Union. He supported the African Union's call for the issue to receive continued support from the United Nations. The UNOAU was strategically placed in assisting the United Nations and the African Union in advancing broad issues outlined in the report. It must be adequately resourced.

U. JOY OGWU ( Nigeria) welcomed the growing cooperative relationship between the United Nations and the African Union. There were numerous lessons to be taken from the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) model. Regional bodies like the African Union had the political will, but they were insufficiently resourced to undertake long-term peacekeeping operations. All

too frequently, African Union members would muster sufficient numbers of peacekeepers, but have their efforts undermined by the lack of resources. Developing the capacity of peacebuilding personnel was necessary, but it was not a substitute for adequate logistics and training. She was encouraged by the prospect of giving the African Union access to United Nations logistic base capacity and United Nations deployment stocks.

On 31 January, the African Union called on the Council to give AMISOM greater support, including through increased funding from United Nations-assessed contributions, she said. That illustrated the need for more predictable funding for African Union-led operations. Today's armed conflicts required nuanced, heightened responses. More support did not create dependency, but a strengthened partnership and cooperation in deploying expert civilian personnel was central to that partnership. The opening of UNOAU was a step in the right direction. She hoped it would lead to a more systematic, less reactive approach to joint peacekeeping operations.

YANG TAO ( [China](#) ) appreciated the Special Representative's hard work to improve cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union, and he hoped the strategic partnership between the two organizations would continue to deepen. He called on the Secretary-General to submit a report, at the earliest date, to that end. The African Union had in-depth knowledge of key political situations on the continent and the Council should draw on that expertise and better integrate the work of the African Union in its discussions. The Council should further support capacity-building for African peacekeeping operations.

EMMANUEL BONNE ( [France](#) ) said the African Union had a history of "close and solid" cooperation with the United Nations. The growing partnership between the two bodies, especially between the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council, was justified, as they shared mutual objectives and could draw on joint experience, as they sought to ensure peace and security on the continent. Efforts should be taken to ensure such positive cooperation continued in the spirit of Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter. He congratulated the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for his work and said that official had enhanced the visibility of the United Nations in Addis Ababa, and throughout the African continent.

REGINA MARIA CORDEIRO DUNLOP ( [Brazil](#) ) said creation of the UNOAU was an important, positive step that he hoped would enhance the United Nations ability to strategically cooperate with the African Union and improve support for African Union peacekeeping, particularly through the 10-year capacity-building programme, the United Nations-African Union and other initiatives. She called for greater African Union involvement in the Organization's ongoing policy work in peacekeeping. Several studies, policies, and lessons learned produced by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support could prove useful to African Union peacekeeping. The United Nations should work with the African Union to support the latter's conflict prevention and mediation capacities. AMISOM needed more material and financial support from the United Nations. She favoured a serious, action-oriented discussion within the United Nations on financial support to African Union peacekeeping missions beyond AMISOM.

IVAN BARBALIĆ ( [Bosnia and Herzegovina](#) ) said the UNOAU, in close cooperation with subregional actors, would significantly contribute to promoting peace and stability in Africa. Its creation would also improve cooperation between the Secretariat and the Commission of the African Union. UNOAU should continue to work with African Union institutions to implement the 10-year capacity-building programme in the framework of the regional coordination mechanisms. Its success would depend on the African Union Commission's leadership and the United Nations effectiveness in supporting regional tasks, in line with the Commission's priorities. Building African Union management capacity was essential for securing more predictable funding. It was critical to develop a broader strategic framework of partnership between the African Union and the United Nations.

MIGUEL BERGER ( [Germany](#) ) said strengthening the partnership between the two organizations was in the mutual interest of both. Establishing the UNOAU was another major step towards enhancing the capacity of the African Union in better coordinating its activities. In the field of peacekeeping, the two organizations were working together in Somalia and Darfur, and joint mediation efforts, such as those currently under way in Sudan, were all examples of the positive efforts being carried out. The international community should continue to support African Union capacity-building. For its part, Germany was providing training and support for the African Standby force, among other initiatives.

DAVID DUNN ( United States) said his delegation recognized the importance of and the challenges involved in forging a solid partnership with regional organizations, such as the African Union, to ensure international peace and security. He encouraged both the United Nations and the African Union to continue working towards such cooperative partnership. It was necessary for the UNOAU to coordinate United Nations activities on the continent, which would be especially crucial in dealing with situations in Somalia, Sudan and elsewhere. Some of the most important recommendations found in the 2008 “Prodi report” had concerned the financing of African Union peace and security capability, and the United States supported the call that such financing mechanisms should be efficient and transparent. Moreover, all initiatives should strive to avoid duplication.

FERNANDO ALZATE ( Colombia) said cooperation must be strengthened between the African Union and the United Nations. The new alliance between the two would produce tangible results. It also provided an excellent opportunity to assess the progress, achievements and challenges of peacekeeping missions in Africa. Missions in Darfur, Sudan and Somalia had called for action in the immediate future. Due to the destabilizing events in those areas, peace missions must be strengthened in Africa and formulas must be developed to resolve the socioeconomic problems that caused them. Training of police and civilian personnel should be in line with Council mandates. The UNOAU could play a key role in training and capacity-building. It was important to explore alternative financing methods, in that regard.

VINAY KUMAR ( India) said that, as 75 per cent of the Council’s time was spent on African issues, it was important for the Council to hear Africa’s views, so that the Council’s action was not only based on what it believed to be African needs, but also on the knowledge of the action of African countries themselves. He welcomed creation of the UNOAU, saying it would help the United Nations deliver key outputs in Africa. The Office must be adequately staffed and resourced and a review of its mandate should be conducted periodically. The Council must not adopt a selective approach to African Union-United Nations cooperation. It must hear the views of others outside the African Union region. The Council must heed the views of the African Union in resolving the Libyan crisis. Cooperation with the Council and the African Union high-level implementation panel for Sudan had successfully implemented important aspects of the comprehensive peace agreement.

DAVID QUARREY ( United Kingdom) said the seriousness of the threats to international peace and security in Africa underlined the need for the international community to work together, and cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations should be central to that. Enhanced cooperation between the two bodies was continuing apace, even as the African Union was making significant strides to build its own institutional capacity. The situation in Sudan continued to be an issue on which cooperation between the two bodies was needed. In light of the agreement announced yesterday on Abyei, it would be essential for the two bodies to work together to ensure that it was implemented. He further noted the joint activities regarding the situation in Libya. Calling for enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union, he said that the key was to have honest, frank and open dialogue, “even on issues on which we disagree”.

IBRAHIM ASSAF ( Lebanon) said the relationship between the United Nations and the African Union had gone through numerous transformations, particularly concerning peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts on the continent. That relationship must continue to be strengthened and the United Nations must continue to support African Union capacity-building. The African Union, for its part, must continue to provide its expertise so that both organizations could better develop their mediation capacities. He hoped that both organizations would continue to strengthen their partnership and cooperation, in line with Chapter VIII of the Charter.

JOSÉ FILIPE MORAES CABRAL ( Portugal) welcomed creation of UNOAU as a tool to strengthen the United Nations-African Union partnership. The regular dialogue between the Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council could benefit from the work in Addis Ababa in May, when the two bodies had evaluated their current level of cooperation. Also, they had expressed common concern for the plight of women in conflict situations and the need to address sexual violence during armed conflict. The Council must work on bolstering dialogue on security issues, particularly with the African Union. He strongly supported international methods to strengthen the international peace and security architecture. Through active participation in the European Union, Portugal had and would continue to advocate European Union support for African Union peace initiatives. There were lessons to be learned from UNAMID and

AMISOM.

ALEXANDER PANKIN ( Russian Federation) said it was important that the Council not be the only player. The African Union and subregional organizations must be actively involved in solving African conflicts. He lauded the creation of the UNOAU, saying it would help the Organization to optimize peacekeeping's potential. There was no doubt that the peacekeeping capacity of the African Union needed further strengthening and appropriate international support towards that end. He noted the need to bolster the African Union's potential in mediation and diplomacy, and he stressed the need for a multilateral security mechanism to react in a timely way to emerging crisis situations. He supported a flexible approach and stressed the need for a detailed analysis, as well as comprehensive consultations between the African Union and the United Nations. The Russian Federation had developed assistance programmes for Africa.

Speaking in his national capacity, NOEL NELSON MESSONE ( Gabon) welcomed the briefing and supported ongoing cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations. He noted that when the Security Council had met in Addis Ababa last month with the African Union Peace and Security Council, he had addressed key matters before both bodies and the members had jointly pledged to promote further cooperation in a host of areas. That was where the UNOAU would be critical, especially to ensure follow-up and analysis on how the partnership between the two bodies could be strengthened.

Taking the floor again, Mr. MUBURI-MUITA said his Office was taking a very broad approach to its work with the African Union that encompassed strategic priorities and "desk-to-desk" level cooperation between the bodies to enhance the recognition of the United Nations in Addis Ababa.

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