

February 2024

Next Steps on the Financing of African Peace Support Operations: Unpacking Security Council Resolution 2719 (2023)

About the Author

Eugene Chen is the director of the Prevention, Peacebuilding, and Protracted Crises program at the NYU Center on International Cooperation.

The approval of a framework for the financing of African Union (AU) peace support operations (PSOs) by the United Nations (UN) Security Council on December 21, 2023, with the adoption of resolution 2719, represents significant progress in the development of the UN-AU partnership in peace and security as well as a commitment from the Security Council to support the adequate, predictable, and sustainable financing of AU-led PSOs. At the same time, the achievements of the negotiators in reaching this outcome should not obscure the additional work that lies ahead to interpret, implement, and build on the resolution.

The experience of AU and subregional operations in the early 2000s clearly demonstrated the value of African missions as first responders to crises on the Continent but also laid bare the need for external assistance to fill critical capability gaps as well as financial support to sustain more complex or longer-term deployments. Many efforts have been made over the years at the UN to more systematically provide African missions with support through UN assessed contributions, including through the 2008 Prodi report,¹ the 2016 UN-AU joint review,² and the 2017 report of the UN secretary-general presenting options for consideration by the Security Council.³ An effort in 2018 to adopt a framework resolution on financing came very close and even made it into blue, but ultimately failed due to the threat of a veto.

In [resolution 2719](#), the African members of the Security Council (A3) secured everything they were unable to achieve in 2018 and more. Beyond the agreement on access to UN assessed contributions, which eluded the A3 in 2018, a comparison between the two texts reveals major concessions on the part of major financial contributors, including in terms of how the Security Council

¹ United Nations. *Report of the African Union-United Nations panel on modalities for support to African Union peacekeeping operations*. [A/63/666-S/2008/813](#) (31 December 2008).

² United Nations. *Report of the joint African Union-United Nations review of available mechanisms to finance and support African Union peace support operations authorized by the United Nations Security Council*. [A/71/410-S/2016/809](#) (28 September 2016).

³ United Nations Security Council. *Report of the Secretary-General on options for authorization and support for African Union peace support operations*. [S/2017/454](#) (26 May 2017).

oversight would be exercised for missions in receipt of UN assessed contributions. However, how the resolution will be implemented will be complicated by the lack of clarity on contentious issues covered in the resolution, such as financial burden-sharing and joint planning, as well as issues not covered in the resolution, such as applicability to PSOs led by subregional configurations or ad hoc coalitions.⁴

Decision-making and authorization

One point of contention that emerged during the negotiations relates to the trigger for the planning process. Some Council members, wishing to have more control over the situations where the framework of resolution 2719 may be activated, have insisted that the joint planning process can start only with a green light from the Security Council. **It is important for the Security Council to avoid delaying the planning process, particularly given the fluidity of many crises. Instead, the Security Council should encourage, rather than discourage, a culture of proactive planning on the part of the Secretariat, as this is necessary for the Secretariat to be better prepared for crises and effectively manage transitions.**

In fact, the proposed consultative planning and decision-making process outlined in the 2023 report of the secretary-general was designed to address the concerns of Council members.⁵ In this process, the decision of the AU Commission Chairperson and UN secretary-general to undertake a joint strategic assessment triggers a formal notification to the UN Security Council and AU Peace and Security Council. This notification provides the two councils with the opportunity to shape the planning process without delaying the process.

As the Security Council indicated that it will consider requests for access to UN assessed contributions on a case-by-case basis, there are four likely outcomes to a joint strategic assessment, as follows: (1) the AU Commission or AU Peace and Security Council decide not to proceed with a request for assessed contributions for the AU-led PSO; (2) the Security Council declines to authorize the AU-led PSO; (3) the Security Council decides to authorize the AU-led PSO but decides not to provide UN access to assessed contributions; or (4) the Security Council decides to authorize the AU-led PSO and decides what proportion of costs, not exceeding 75 percent, to apportion among UN member states.⁶ The UN and AU must be prepared for the possibility of any of these four outcomes whenever the process is initiated.

⁴ “In Hindsight: The Financing of AU-led Peace Support Operations: Assessing Council Dynamics and Anticipating Future Action.” Security Council Report (31 January 2024). <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2024-02/in-hindsight-the-financing-of-au-led-peace-support-operations-assessing-council-dynamics-and-anticipating-future-action.php>.

⁵ United Nations Security Council. *Implementation of Security Council resolutions 2320 (2016) and 2378 (2017) and considerations related to the financing of African Union peace support operations mandated by the Security Council: Report of the Secretary-General. S/2023/303* (1 May 2023).

⁶ A fifth outcome—the establishment of a UN peace operation instead of an AU-led PSO, is also technically possible.

This process outlined in paragraph 3, however, is presented at a very high level; implementation will require a much more granular understanding of the planning process. **To manage expectations and avoid confusion, it will be necessary to ensure that all stakeholders have a common understanding of the planning processes and terminology.** For example, the resolution makes several references to joint strategic assessments. In the UN, a strategic assessment is intended to bring together all pillars of the organization along with other international and regional actors, as appropriate, to (1) jointly develop a shared understanding of a conflict or post-conflict situation, the role of stakeholders, and core priorities for sustaining peace and (2) to propose options for UN engagement on the basis of an assessment of risks and opportunities.⁷ Strategic assessments are distinct from the more mission-centric strategic or independent reviews that the Security Council has requested in recent years. Paragraph 3 of the resolution also references mission concepts and concepts of operation. These terms are not interchangeable. Under UN mission planning guidance, mission concepts are an articulation of strategic direction for mandate implementation. A draft mission concept can help articulate recommendations to the Security Council in advance of a decision on a mandate and should be revised on the basis of the actual mandate as issued. Mission concepts inform the development of component-level concepts, including the military and police concepts of operation and support concept, where applicable, and they need only be reviewed and revised when a strategic shift or reconfiguration of a mission is being considered. How these processes and products are developed needs to be clarified in the joint planning guidelines that the UN and AU have developed over the past year. These should be finalized, taking into account the provisions contained in resolution 2719.

Financial arrangements and procedures

The elements of the resolution that raise the most questions, however, relate to the financial arrangements and procedures. Further clarity is required on how the UN Financial Regulations and Rules, budget processes, and reimbursement frameworks should be applied to AU-led PSOs and whether these supersede the AU Financial Rules and Regulations in cases where access to assessed contributions has been authorized.

Financial Regulations and Rules (paragraphs 2 and 4)

Paragraph 2 of resolution 2719 appears to indicate that AU-led PSOs for which the Security Council has authorized access to UN assessed contributions would remain under the direct and effective command and control of the AU. At the same time, paragraph 4 of the resolution specifies that AU-led PSOs with access to UN assessed contributions will comply with the UN Financial Regulations⁸

⁷ United Nations. *Policy on Integrated Assessment and Planning* (14 February 2023).

⁸ United Nations. *Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations: Secretary-General's bulletin*. [ST/SGB/2013/4](#) (1 July 2013).

and Rules⁹, standards for financial oversight, and accountability mechanisms. It also reaffirms the intergovernmental process for the preparation and presentation of reports by the secretary-general in accordance with the established peacekeeping budgetary process for UN assessed contributions. These two paragraphs are incompatible.

Under the UN Financial Regulations and Rules, the authority and responsibility for peacekeeping budgets—including determining objectives, outputs, activities, and resource allocations in budgets submitted to the General Assembly—is vested in the secretary-general.¹⁰ It is unclear what it would mean for this to apply to AU PSO budgets, given that the AU Commission is not bound by UN regulations and rules and the UN secretary-general does not have authority or responsibility for the preparation of AU PSO budgets. Similarly, the authority to incur commitments and make payments on the appropriations voted by the General Assembly is vested in the secretary-general.¹¹ Delegation of authority from the secretary-general to the head of a mission is the basis of the framework for authority, command, and control in UN peace operations.¹² However, the system of delegation of authority within the UN does not allow for the secretary-general to delegate authority in the administration of the Financial Regulations and Rules outside the Organization.¹³

Two approaches are currently available for reconciling these two paragraphs, though neither fully aligns with all the provisions in resolution 2719. Other approaches for reconciling the two paragraphs remain theoretical, as they would first require action by the General Assembly to amend the Financial Regulations and Rules or establish new budgetary processes applicable to AU-led PSOs.

The first option is to utilize the subvention option from the 2017 report of the secretary-general.¹⁴ Under this option, the secretary-general would not prepare a budget for a PSO for consideration by the General Assembly but would instead inform the General Assembly of the amount of the PSO budget to be financed through assessed contributions. Once the General Assembly appropriates an amount for the subvention, the secretary-general would transfer this amount to the AU Commission, after which it would be the AU Commission Chairperson—not the UN secretary-general—who would be responsible for the management and utilization of the funds, thus affording the AU direct and effective command and control over the PSO. Although the

⁹ United Nations Secretariat. *Financial Regulations and Rules: Secretary-General's bulletin*. [ST/SGB/2013/4/Amend.1](#) (4 December 2018).

¹⁰ See financial regulations 2.12 and 2.13 and financial rule 102.8

¹¹ See financial regulations 5.1 and 5.8.

¹² United Nations Department of Peace Operations and Department of Operational Support. *Authority, Command and Control in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Policy*. 2019.23 (25 October 2019).

¹³ United Nations Secretariat. *Delegation of authority in the administration of the Staff Regulations and Rules and the Financial Regulations and Rules*. [ST/SGB/2019/2](#) (17 December 2018).

¹⁴ United Nations, S/2017/454, paragraphs 32-33.

process for providing a subvention to the AU would comply with the UN Financial Regulations and Rules, the preparation and presentation of the resource requirements and the execution and reporting on the budget would not follow the established peacekeeping budget process.

The second option is to follow the established peacekeeping budget process, mutatis mutandis. This, however, would require that the UN retain some degree of authority, command, and control over activities financed through the appropriation approved by the General Assembly.

Under the joint mission model outlined in the 2023 report of the secretary-general,¹⁵ following the established budget process would be straightforward; as the AU-led PSO is simultaneously a UN peace operation, budgets would be developed in the same manner as peace operation budgets, though they would also likely require the approval of the AU Commission Chairperson. The situation becomes complicated when a separate UN entity is responsible for delivering a support package to an AU-led PSO. The budgets of AU-led PSOs do not follow the methodology or presentation used for the budgets of UN peace operations. As such, **the General Assembly will have to pronounce itself on fundamental questions such as whether it will accept the objectives, expected accomplishments, outputs, activities, and resource allocation in budgets prepared by the AU Commission or if the secretary-general will be responsible for the preparation of the budgets of AU PSOs.**

If the General Assembly decides to consider budgets prepared by the AU Commission, the AU will need to prepare budgets and performance reports at the level of granularity necessary to survive the scrutiny of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Affairs and the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly unless the General Assembly indicates that it is willing to consider AU PSO budgets in a different form and level of detail as those of UN peace operations. The General Assembly will also have to clarify whether AU-led PSOs have access to advances from the Peacekeeping Reserve Fund to support mission start-up and expansion¹⁶ and whether AU-led PSOs may avail themselves of the liquidity measures approved by the General Assembly in its [resolution 76/272](#) of 29 June 2022. These questions have significant implications for financing UN peacekeeping operations, particularly given that AU-led PSOs will be relying heavily on sources other than assessed contributions for funding.

Presumably, a special account through which to receive contributions would be established for each AU-led PSO¹⁷, and the Board of Auditors would review the

¹⁵ United Nations, [S/2023/303](#).

¹⁶ See financial regulation 4.6.

¹⁷ See financial regulation 6.3.

associated annual financial statements.¹⁸ A decision would be required as to whether the Secretariat would play an active role in the management of the appropriation or if the account would simply serve as a pass-through mechanism. The procedures by which unencumbered balances at the end of the financial period would be accounted for and credited back to UN member states would also have to be clarified. All the additional work required to support AU-led PSOs will likely lead to an additional workload for departments and offices at Headquarters and may, therefore, necessitate that AU-led PSOs contribute to the support account to finance these additional capacities at Headquarters. This also requires a decision by the General Assembly. The AU Commission will also require additional capacities not only for the management of PSOs but also to coordinate with the Secretariat only on administrative and operational issues in addition to political and thematic matters, all of which will also require adequate, predictable, and sustainable funding to maintain.

Beyond budgeting and financial matters, the UN Financial Regulations and Rules also cover procurement and property management, including the disposal of property and the disposition of assets of liquidating missions.¹⁹ The General Assembly will need to clarify whether it expects these provisions to be followed for AU-led PSOs in receipt of assessed contributions.

Financial burden-sharing (paragraphs 4, 6, and 9)

With up to 75 percent of the costs of eligible AU PSOs to be covered by UN assessed contributions, attention is understandably placed on how the remaining amount will be mobilized. The reaffirmation of the established UN peacekeeping budgetary process in paragraph 4 has implications for paragraph 9, which indicates that the contribution of the AU will include the provision of personnel, pre-deployment training and readiness, involvement in planning, situation analysis, assessment, and management in advance of authorization by the Security Council. This echoes the February 2023 AU consensus paper²⁰ and reflects arguments previously made by the AU that the actual cost of AU member states' contributions to PSOs is under-valued.²¹ A clear difference in opinion persists between the UN and AU on what counts as a contribution. However, it is clear that under the established UN peacekeeping budgetary process, these are not costs included in mission budgets. **The contribution of uniformed personnel and the provision of pre-deployment training**

¹⁸ See financial rule 106.1.

¹⁹ See financial regulations 5.12, 5.13, and 5.14.

²⁰ African Union. *Consensus paper on predictable, adequate, and sustainable financing for African Union peace and security activities* (February 2023). <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-documents/document/consensus-paper-on-predictable-adequate-and-sustainable-financing-for-african-union-peace-and-security-activities.php>.

²¹ African Union Peace and Security Council. *Report on the relevant provisions of United Nations Security Council resolution 2320 (2016) on United Nations assessed contributions for AU-led peace operations authorized by the Security Council*. PSC/PR/RPT(CDLXXXIX) (30 May 2017).

are the responsibility of troop- and police-contributing countries,²² while planning, analysis, assessment, and management in advance of a Security Council mandate are part of the normal backstopping activities at Headquarters covered in the support account. These, therefore, cannot be counted as contributions, in-kind or otherwise, to a mission budget. Moreover, as a mission budget cannot exist before a mission has been established by either the General Assembly or Security Council, whether the costs of what the AU considers to be the preparation state of AU-led PSOs should be included in a mission budget is a moot point.

Another open question, however, relates to what costs to consider as part of an AU-led PSO. For joint missions, the answer is once again reasonably straightforward. In such cases, the Security Council would presumably adopt a resolution in which it not only authorizes the mission but also specifies the proportion of costs to be met by the UN member states, up to the maximum amount of 75 percent set out in paragraph 6 of resolution 2719. The costs of the AU-led PSO would, therefore, be the General Assembly appropriation (i.e., the approved budget) for the mission, of which the proportion specified by the Security Council would be apportioned among UN member states in accordance with the relevant scale of assessments. The source of the remainder of the appropriation could come from a variety of sources, including through a grant from the AU—which could come from the AU Peace Fund—or through voluntary contributions.

The answer is less straightforward for the delivery of a support package by the UN through assessed contributions. **Member states must decide whether some or all of the appropriation for the UN entity delivering a support package—whether a UN peace operation or a standalone support office—should be considered as part of the costs of an AU-led PSO for the purpose of implementing paragraph 6 of resolution 2719.** UN support packages to AU-led PSOs funded through UN assessed contributions deliver capabilities required for the functioning of the PSO in question but are not currently included in the budgets of the AU PSO. The costs of UN support are significant compared to those included in AU-led PSO budgets.²³ If the cost of a support package delivered by a UN entity is considered to be part of the costs of an AU-led PSO for the purposes of implementing paragraph 6, it is likely that over 75% of the total cost of the PSO will already be included in the budget of the UN entity, especially if the support

²² The UN reimbursement framework approved in General Assembly resolution 67/261 is intended to cover only common essential and additional costs incurred by troop- and police-contributing countries in the deployment of their military and police contingents to UN peace operations.

²³ For example, the 2022 budget for the AU Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) amounted to EUR 175.4 million (approximately USD 187.7 million), far less than the UNSOS appropriation of \$521.7 million. See Tadesse, Bitania, Zekarias Beshah, Solomon Ayele Dersso. “Cash strapped African Union Transition Mission in Somalia starts its second year facing uncertain financial future.” Amani Africa (4 April 2023). <https://amaniafrica-et.org/cash-strapped-african-union-transition-mission-in-somalia-atmis-starts-its-second-year-facing-uncertain-financial-future/>.

package includes the cost of reimbursement. However, differences in budget methodology and presentation between the UN and AU would likely complicate attempts at arriving at an accurate calculation of the proportion of costs distributed between the UN and AU.

Reimbursement frameworks (paragraph 5)

The UN Financial Regulations and Rules specify that member states shall be reimbursed at rates approved by the General Assembly.²⁴ UN standards and rates of reimbursement are not optimized for AU-led PSOs, which is why the secretary-general recommended in 2017 the development of a reimbursement framework for AU-led PSOs.²⁵ Moreover, the UN contingent-owned equipment system has fundamental flaws that undermine its ability to effectively enable contemporary UN peace operations, let alone the more kinetic activities undertaken by some AU-led PSOs. The most significant flaw is the fact that—as reimbursement is limited to serviceable equipment—the contingent-owned equipment system creates a structural disincentive for the use of equipment in support of mandated tasks, an issue that is exacerbated in contexts with an elevated likelihood of loss or damage due to hostile action.²⁶ Other limitations include that the system is intended to reimburse equipment already in national inventories and is ineffective at helping troop- and police-contributing countries to deploy and sustain new equipment and technologies that may be required to counter emerging threats.

Paragraph 5 of resolution 2719 specifies that reimbursement should be provided according to the reimbursement framework covered by UN peace operations and as contained in the UN contingent-owned equipment manual. At the moment, the only reimbursement frameworks the General Assembly has approved are those applicable to UN peace operations. However, the General Assembly is scheduled to review both the personnel and contingent-owned equipment frameworks in 2026—the first time that the current quadrennial cost survey process and the triennial contingent-owned equipment process have aligned. **The 2026 reviews of both frameworks provide an opportunity for the General Assembly to determine the most effective means by which to utilize reimbursement processes to enable UN peace operations, AU PSOs, and any other operations that may in the future receive support through UN assessed contributions to achieve their mandates.**

²⁴ See financial regulation 5.10.

²⁵ United Nations, *S/2017/454*, paragraph 66.

²⁶ Chen, Eugene. “Not a silver bullet: The push for assessed contributions for African-led peace support operations”. New York: New York University Center on International Cooperation (November 2023). <https://cic.nyu.edu/resources/not-a-silver-bullet-the-push-for-assessed-contributions-for-african-led-peace-support-operations/>

Support models (paragraph 8)

Paragraph 8 of the resolution indicates that the Security Council will prioritize the establishment of a UN support office to deliver logistical, financial, and other support through UN assessed contributions. However, it is important to recall that support packages need not be delivered by a standalone support office. The light and heavy support packages for the former AU Mission in Sudan were delivered by the former UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS), a UN peacekeeping operation, and a support package could conceivably be delivered through other types of UN peace operations.²⁷

The standalone support office model, as it is currently understood, is not the ideal model for delivering a support package but was necessitated by the specific circumstances surrounding the establishment of the first such office, the UN Support Office for the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), UNSOA. UNSOA was established as a standalone support office because the UN did not have a peace operation present in Somalia to support the AMISOM in 2009. At the time, the UN Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS) was based in Nairobi, Kenya. AMISOM was intended as an interim stabilization force in anticipation of a UN peacekeeping operation in Somalia, and UNSOA was established in part to support the eventual incorporation of AMISOM forces into a UN peacekeeping operation²⁸. Its expenses were, therefore, apportioned on the basis of the scale of assessments for UN peacekeeping operations. It was not until 2013 that conditions in Somalia were conducive for the replacement of UNPOS with a UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) based in Mogadishu. The continued presence of both AMISOM and UNSOA meant UNSOM was established as a special political mission.

The establishment of a standalone support office would separate UN political efforts and UN operational support to an AU-led PSO across different UN entities with different reporting lines to UN Headquarters.²⁹ The preambular paragraphs of resolution 2719 emphasize the importance of enhancing and aligning the UN and AU efforts to support national initiatives to address security challenges, including through comprehensive solutions, and underscore the need to ensure coherence, coordination, and complementarity between AU-led PSOs and UN peace operations, in accordance with their respective mandates and to avoid duplication of efforts. These objectives could, in fact, be better served through other models that much more closely align the efforts of AU-led PSOs with the political strategies supported by a UN peace operation. **When a potential AU-led PSO is being considered to undertake peace enforcement or other activities of a more kinetic nature, a support package delivered through a UN peace operation should be considered.** This would not only help link the efforts of the PSO to a broader political strategy but also help facilitate the implementation of the UN human rights due diligence policy on UN support to non-UN forces. **When a**

potential AU-led PSO is being considered to implement tasks within the repertoire of UN peace operations, a joint UN-AU mission should be considered. The joint mission model outlined in the secretary-general's 2023 report³⁰ takes into account the experience and lessons learned from the AU-UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). The summary report on lessons learned from UNAMID found that the limitations of UNAMID were not linked to its hybrid nature but were determined mainly by the context in which the mission operated and its relations with the host government.³¹ If these options are not feasible for a specific situation, particular attention is required to determine how a support office can reinforce the broader political strategy.

Other considerations

Scope

One point of contention in negotiating the draft resolution related to the eligibility of PSOs undertaken by subregional configurations—such as the regional economic communities and regional mechanisms—and ad hoc coalitions for UN assessed contributions. Security Council resolution 2719 specifies that its provisions only cover AU-led PSOs. However, the resolution did not provide a clear definition of AU-led PSO.³² As such, **PSOs undertaken by subregional configurations could potentially be eligible for funding through the framework of resolution 2719 if they are authorized through the consultative UN-AU planning and decision-making process and if they are undertaken in line with the compliance mechanisms enumerated in paragraph 11 of the resolution.** This builds on previous statements by the Security Council, including in [resolution 2717 \(2023\)](#), that the Council is prepared to consider conditions in which limited logistical and operational support may be deployed to an AU-mandated regional force and that regional forces should implement a robust compliance framework in accordance with the AU compliance framework.

By creating incentives for subregional configurations to work through the AU, the framework established in resolution 2719 can, therefore, help maximize the impact of the investments made over the years by the UN, European Union, and other partners in the development of the AU compliance framework and

²⁷ Chen, Eugene. “How can the UN best support Kenya’s mission to Haiti? Delay provides time to reflect.” IPI Global Observatory (31 January 2024). <https://theglobalobservatory.org/2024/01/how-can-the-un-best-support-kenyas-mission-to-haiti-delay-provides-time-to-reflect/>.

²⁸ Security Council [resolution 1863](#) of 16 January 2009.

²⁹ Under current arrangements at Headquarters, support offices are the responsibility of the Department of Operational Support, while individual peace operations (whether field-based missions or non-resident special envoys) are the responsibility of either the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs or the Department of Peace Operations.

³⁰ United Nations. [S/2023/303](#).

³¹ United Nations Security Council. *Summary report on lessons learned from the experience of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur*. [S/2021/1099](#), Annex (29 December 2021).

³² The terminology of AU-led PSO is absent from the 2021 AU PSO doctrine, which distinguishes between four types of PSO, namely (1) AU PSO, (2) AU-authorized PSO, (3) AU-endorsed PSO, and (4) AU-recognized PSO.

associated capacities by ensuring the application in as broad a range of PSOs as possible.

First application

The first invocation of resolution 2719 for a PSO will set a precedent for the future. As such, the Security Council should avoid applying the framework before the issues raised in this policy brief have been sufficiently reflected upon. The UN Secretariat and AU Commission must be provided sufficient time to finalize the joint planning guidelines and work out policies and procedures for new elements, such as the payment of personnel reimbursement and the consideration of death and disability claims. Within the Secretariat, many separate departments and offices will have to find a way to effectively coordinate their respective efforts, including the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Department of Peace Operations (in particular, the Office of the Assistant Secretary-General for Africa), the Department of Operational Support (which is responsible for support partnerships and reimbursement policy), the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance (including the Office of Programme Planning, Finance and Budget on financing questions and the Office of Human Resources on conduct and discipline policy), the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (on compliance questions), and the UN Office to the AU in Addis Ababa. Despite the fact that the secretary-general has championed the role of regional organizations such as the AU to undertake peace enforcement and counter-terrorism, the Office of Counter-Terrorism has not to date been involved in questions of UN support to AU PSOs, but it should engage in this process to ensure that its efforts, including on national capacity building, are fully aligned.

Although the preparatory measures are critical for successful implementation, these should not be drawn out indefinitely, as planning processes are perfected through practice. Paragraph 16 of the resolution requires the secretary-general to submit an annual report on progress in the implementation of the framework. **The first progress report submitted pursuant to paragraph 16 is an important milestone, and the UN Secretariat and AU Commission should endeavor to complete their preparatory work in advance of the report to update the Security Council on the policies and procedures developed to implement the framework.** If the Secretariat concludes that changes to the Financial Regulations and Rules, budgetary processes, or reimbursement frameworks are necessary to implement the resolution, it should—in parallel—develop proposals for consideration by the General Assembly.

Final reflections

The adoption of Security Council resolution 2719 is an important milestone in the UN-AU partnership on peace and security. Although members of the AU Peace and Security Council would have preferred that the entirety of the costs of AU PSOs be financed through UN assessed contributions, the primary responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security has never represented an obligation of the UN to finance the activities undertaken by regional organizations or ad hoc coalitions undertaken under authorization by the Security Council.³³ The AU will only be able to exercise full command and control over its PSOs when it is able to meet their financial requirements on its own terms. In this regard, the steps AU member states took over the past decade to enhance their ownership over the AU budget, including strengthening of the AU Peace Fund, should be commended. Paragraph 14 of resolution 2719 notes that the objective of UN-AU collaboration in support, planning, oversight, accountability, compliance, and decision-making should be to enhance the autonomy and ownership of the AU over its PSOs. To this end, the financing framework established in the resolution can help support AU PSOs until the AU can fully finance its peace and security efforts. In the interim, tangible progress by the AU to mobilize resources for its PSOs may also increase the likelihood of the Security Council giving favorable consideration to future requests for access to UN assessed contributions.

The framework resolution, however, should be viewed more than just through a financing lens. Contemporary peace and security challenges are too complicated for any single actor to tackle alone. With the adoption of the resolution, the Security Council underscored the importance of ensuring coherence, coordination, and complementarity between UN peace operations and AU PSOs. The collaborative planning and decision-making process approved in resolution 2719 will help the UN leverage the expertise available across the UN and its partners, including the AU and subregional configurations, to support national efforts to address security challenges through comprehensive solutions that respond to the root causes and drivers of conflict in Africa.

**NYU Center on
International
Cooperation**

The Center on International Cooperation is a non-profit research center housed at New York University. Our vision is to advance effective multilateral action to prevent crises and build peace, justice, and inclusion.

www.cic.nyu.edu

³³ Chen, “Not a silver bullet”.