



IPSS

Institute for Peace
& Security Studies
Addis Ababa University



**AFRICAN UNION NETWORK OF THINK-TANKS FOR PEACE
(NeTT4Peace)**

INSTITUTE FOR PEACE AND SECURITY STUDIES (IPSS)

INSTITUTE FOR JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION (IJR)

Focus Group Discussion on the Reform of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC)

Thursday 30th July 10h30-12h30

**Institute for Peace and Security Studies, Sidist Kilo, Addis Ababa,
Ethiopia**

1. Background:

The **Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS)**, the **Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR)** and the **African Union Network of Think-Tanks for Peace (AU NeTT4Peace)** will convene a **Focus Group Discussion (FGD)** on the reform of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) which will include an analysis of the Common African Position on the Reform of the UNSC, also known as the **Ezulwini Consensus**, of 2005, and Sirte Declaration. In addition, the discussion will also engage with the decision of the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government, of February 2026, outlining the **African Union Model for the Inter-Governmental Negotiations (IGN)** with an emphasis on how its recommendations can be implemented.

This Focus Group Discussion will assess the recommendations of the **United Nations Pact for the Future's Action Point 39** which calls for *"strengthening global governance through inclusive multilateralism and reforming international institutions to better reflect today's*

geopolitical realities.”¹ In particular, Action Point 39 stipulates that the UN will “reform the Security Council, recognizing the urgent need to make it more representative, inclusive, transparent, efficient, effective, democratic and accountable... redress the historical injustice against Africa as a priority.”²

The Focus Group will engage with AU member states on the African Union Model for the IGN, and assess how its recommendations can be implemented, by generating **policy options that will enhance decision-making processes** to more effectively position the continent’s policy demands for representation on the UN Security Council.

2. Context:

There is growing recognition that the **multilateral institutions** established in the aftermath of World War II need to evolve, becoming more inclusive and equitable. The **selective application of international law** and the **misuse of the authority of international organizations** has prompted debate on the inclusivity and fairness of the global order and system. Devastating crises including Sudan, Sahel, Somalia, Mozambique, and Palestine, as well as climate change, peace, security, governance and the improvement of socio-economic livelihoods around the world. These challenges have further exposed the **weaknesses of the collective security system**, as well as the **limitations of the UN Security Council architecture for maintaining peace and stability**.

Africa is confronted with multiple challenges, including security, governance, environmental and socio-economic issues, some of which can only be addressed through more effective multilateralism and the revival of well-functioning institutions for global governance. While Africa has been marginal in the debates and discourses relating to international relations, **there is increased recognition of the continent’s growing role and position in the global stage**.

From the early decades of the UN, there was an asymmetrical relationship between the United Nations and the African continent. The colonisation of the African continent, undermined the ability of a broad range African perspectives to inform the formation of the multilateral system that emerged in 1945. As a collective, the majority of African countries were not in a position to influence policy at the UN, notably in the initial framing of how decisions were made in the institution.

This historical exclusion marginalized Africa’s aspirations in policies that prioritised the needs and interests of the continent. Since then, African states have been vying for equal engagement and representation in UN bodies. Africa has been trying to challenge through processes that are anchored on redress for the historical injustice that Africa endured. **The next decade will lay the foundation for the remaking of the global system as emerging powers assert themselves on the international stage**.

3. Participation:

The meeting will bring together Addis Ababa-based diplomats and key stakeholders from member states and participants of the Briefing will include:

- Diplomats from AU Member States and AU Commission representatives;
- Regional Economic Community and Inter-governmental representatives;

¹ United Nations, *UN Summit of the Future: Pact of the Future*, General Assembly Resolution (A/RES/79/1), 22 September 2024, Action Point 39.

² United Nations, *UN Summit of the Future: Pact of the Future*, Action Point 39.

- Policy analysts and civil society actors.

4. Objectives and Activity:

The objective of the Focus Group Discussion is to engage with AU Member States to address the gap in continental perspectives **generate insights** which can contribute towards shaping and influencing ongoing efforts to the reform of the UN Security Council.

The findings of the Focus Group Discussion will **contribute towards policy reflections** among African Union Member States in enhancing their decision-making processes and to inform their efforts to evaluate the Ezulwini Consensus, in order to more effectively contribute towards the reform of the UN Security Council.

- **Objective 1:** To enhance the knowledge and understanding among diplomats of the African Union Model and Common African Position on the Reform of the UN Security Council;
- **Objective 2:** To strengthen capacity of AU member states, RECs, and civil society actors to engage with the issue of UNSC reform through policy interventions;
- **Objective 3:** Identifying strategies to engage the African Union, RECs and Member States and civil society actors in efforts to raise awareness and mobilize for the pursuit of UNSC reform;
- **Objective 4:** Enhance and strengthen the networks to engage diplomatic champions to provide strategic support to AU Member States on UNSC reform.

5. Expected Outcomes:

The Focus Group Discussion will engage African Union Member States and policy analysts on the Ezulwini Consensus, Sirte Declaration and AU Heads of State Decision on the African Union Model for the IGN. The meeting will **generate insights to enhance decision-making of AU member states** on UN Security Council reform and identify strategies to engage with the IGN process.

6. Venue and Date: The Focus Group Discussion will be convened at the Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS), in Sidist Kilo, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on Thursday 30th July

7. About the Organisers:

African Union Network for Think-Tanks on Peace:

In February 2023, the African Union Commission for Political Affairs Peace and Security (DPAPS) of the AU Commission launched the African Union Network of Think Tanks for Peace (NeTT4Peace) in Addis Ababa. This Network of Think Tanks for Peace is an initiative of DPAPS that intends to drive the much-needed strategic partnership between the research community, focusing on governance, peace and security, and the Department.

About the Institute for Peace and Security Studies:

The Institute for Peace and Security Studies is a semi-autonomous research institution based at Addis Ababa University. Since its establishment 2007, IPSS has been focusing on a variety of thematic areas, but mainly security, conflict, sustainable development/ economy, environment, gender and Human Rights. It has been engaged in rigorous and competent

research and training activities in the prior list and other related thematic areas producing excellent academic and policy outputs. IPSS's work is built on three pillars namely: rigorous research, capacity building (African institutions and individuals) and policy dialogue. The work of IPSS at the regional level is inscribed into its collaboration with the African Union Commission. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) formalising the collaboration was endorsed by the AU's Executive Council in January 2010 and renewed in September 2025. Under this program, IPSS promotes the values of a democratic and peaceful society through various policy dialogue platforms and its evidence-based research outputs. One of such output is the "African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) Impact Assessment Report" which evaluates the aggregate impact and effectiveness of interventions by the AU and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs). In addition to such continental reports, Policy Briefs and Country Profiles periodically analyses peace and security issues of selected African countries. IPSS also serves as the Secretariat of the Tana High-Level Forum on Security in Africa, an annual high-level gathering of African Heads of States, policy makers, academia, and representatives of international and regional organisations as well as CSOs, youth, women organisations and the private sector. The Forum aims to find solutions to peace and security challenges in Africa and works towards coming up with feasible recommendations that can trickle down to meaningful policies and/or actions. As such, the outcomes of the Forum will inform the Institute's activities in education, research, and policy dialogues.

Furthermore, in February 2023, IPSS was selected as the Secretariat for the African Union Network of Think Tanks for Peace (NeTT4Peace) by the Department of Political Affairs Peace and Security (DPAPS) of the African Union. As such, IPSS plans to stir this network to have a comprehensive and structured partnership between the AU and African think- tanks and to further synergise the process of AU response through informed settings.

About the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation:

The Institute for Justice and Reconciliation, established in 2000, is a Pan-African organisation works collaboratively with governments, inter-governmental and civil society actors to contribute towards building fair, democratic and inclusive societies across the continent, through transitional justice, truth recovery, reparations, institutional reform and peacebuilding interventions. The IJR's work is informed the insights gained from working with governmental stakeholders and grassroot communities in countries such as Burundi, Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Eastern DRC, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Sudan, South Africa, Uganda and Zimbabwe. The IJR is also conducting a survey of African decision and policy-makers on the revival of multilateralism given the context of the evolving global order. The IJR is a trusted advisor to key decision makers and inter-governmental actors on transitional justice and peacebuilding initiatives, and engages with the African Union (AU), SADC, EAC, IGAD, ICGLR, European Union (EU), and the United Nations system. IJR has partnered with the UN Development Programme (UNDP) on a number of in-country interventions in Africa. IJR has positioned itself as a provider of choice of reliable qualitative data on public perception in the areas of peace and security. The pioneering South African Reconciliation Barometer, enables the IJR to be the leading African think tanks in terms of providing public opinion data in these areas. We welcome collaboration with like-minded partners and invite you to find out more about our work on our website: www.ijr.org.za

**AU Network of Think-Tanks for Peace, Institute for Peace and Security Studies,
Institute for Justice and Reconciliation**

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