

**Security Council**

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**Letter dated 1 March 2023 from the Permanent Representative of
Mozambique to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

I have the honour to inform you that Mozambique, in its capacity as President of the Security Council for the month of March 2023, will chair a briefing on the topic “Maintenance of international peace and security: security sector reform”, on 16 March 2023.

In order to guide the discussions, Mozambique has prepared the concept note attached to the present letter (see annex). I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) **Pedro Comissário**
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 1 March 2023 from the Permanent Representative of Mozambique to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Concept note for the Security Council briefing on strengthening security sector reform and governance, 16 March 2023, 3 p.m.

I. Introduction

During its presidency of the Security Council in March, Mozambique will chair a briefing on the topic “Maintenance of international peace and security: security sector reform”.

The briefing intends to create a space for Security Council members to exchange views and updates on Security Council resolution [2553 \(2020\)](#) on security sector reform, in which, inter alia, the Secretary-General was requested to produce a report on his efforts to strengthen the United Nations comprehensive approach to security sector reform.

II. Background

In his report of 15 March 2022 ([S/2022/280](#)), the Secretary-General built on resolution [2553 \(2020\)](#) and embraced the inclusion of the term “security sector governance”, which indicates the necessity of addressing security sector-related challenges as an element of broader governance-focused approaches.

The report further underlined that security sector reform and governance need to be addressed meaningfully early on. In that regard, politicians and mediators may have to resist the temptation of having parties sign off on a quick but insufficiently explicit accord that leaves too many security-related disputes unresolved.

While the appeal of rapid progress in dire situations is understandable, experience has shown that rushed agreements can easily collapse when further steps are required towards concrete compromise or division of power regarding the security sector.

Moreover, Security Council mandates that subsequently request peace operations to implement security sector reform after rushed peace agreements may not be effective when the political foundations for such implementation are absent.

Changes in the way that the security sector is governed and organized will inevitably bring about changes in the distribution of power and resources, not only among national institutions but also in society. Therefore, national ownership of reform processes should not refer just to narrow political alliances but should include sustained consultations with local communities and inclusive dialogue, including with civil society, and building government capacities for such activities.

Societal divisions, competition in access to State resources and unwillingness to address structural risks and drivers of conflict in the security sector are key obstacles to developing inclusive and meaningful security frameworks in conflict-affected settings. Tight deadlines, often imposed by donors that are unwilling to provide support in the absence of national planning frameworks, inadvertently favour technical documents developed by foreign experts over broad-based dialogue and consultation.

Security sector governance brings into focus the role and incentives of diverse actors beyond State security institutions, such as private, informal and traditional

security actors, including elders, religious leaders and armed groups. Where relevant, the possible engagement of such groups needs to be assessed against considerations related to diversity and representation.

Unlike other areas of international assistance, such as development assistance or humanitarian action, security sector coordination is not guided by overarching principles of assistance. Coordination among international partners is not built on shared analysis, assessments and planning and is rarely linked to clear, shared priorities.

Technical capacity-building programmes are developed and approved in national capitals and cannot be easily adjusted to changing circumstances on the ground. Where the United Nations is implementing Security Council mandates for security sector reform, it is critical that all international support provided, including bilateral and multilateral and that of the United Nations, be closely coordinated.

Important national security sector reform and governance priorities, such as democratic governance and accountability of security institutions, may not receive sufficient funding even when prioritized in national prevention, recovery and development plans. Official development assistance (ODA)-eligible funding for security sector reform remains a largely untapped source of external financing for security sector reform and governance. In 2019, only approximately \$800 million in ODA was allocated to security system management and reform globally, or 0.6 per cent of total ODA. In addition, security is not included in the integrated national financing frameworks for sustainable development.

Security Council resolution [2553 \(2020\)](#) encouraged the development of security sector reform strategies and programmes that would remove barriers to women's meaningful participation in the security sector and increase their representation. However, in country-specific mandates, gender is featured in the language of only 4 out of 11 Security Council mandates on security sector reform. Furthermore, where mandates and policies exist, a significant gap is found between the expectations established by those frameworks and the resources – political, technical and financial – available for the Organization's work in that area.

The Security Council has encouraged the Secretary-General and his special representatives, special envoys and resident coordinators to fully consider the strategic value of security sector reform and to consider the role of security sector reform in advancing operational and structural prevention initiatives. The African Union recognized the role of security sector reform in addressing the root causes of conflict in its continental policy on security sector reform (2011).

In response to the request by the Security Council that his senior representatives in the field assume enhanced responsibilities in support of security sector reform coordination, the Secretary-General highlights challenges to ensuring predictable funding for security sector reform. Successful transitions and exits of peace operations depend on the ability of national stakeholders to develop and implement fiscally sustainable reform strategies and to secure funding, from national budgets and from development partners, beyond the lifespan of a peace operation.

III. Guiding questions

- How can the Security Council improve the inclusion of security sector reform in the context of peace processes?
- How can the Security Council contribute to the principle of a governance-focused approach to security sector reform as outlined by the Secretary-General in his report?

- How can the Security Council support the recommendations of the Secretary-General to improve the United Nations coordination role and improve the predictability of security sector reform support and implementation beyond the lifetime of a mission?

IV. Format of the meeting

The meeting will take the form of a briefing. It will be chaired by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Mozambique to the United Nations, Pedro Comissário Afonso.

V. Briefers

The Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations (to be confirmed)

The Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, Bankole Adeoye (to be confirmed)

The Permanent Representative of South Africa and Co-Chair of the Group of Friends of Security Sector Reform, Mathu Joyini
