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DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

### *Press Release N°319/2016*

## **AFRICAN UNION AND UNITED NATIONS STRENGTHEN COOPERATION IN AREAS OF PEACEKEEPING SUPPORT**

**New York, USA - 21 September 2016:** The African Union Deputy Chairperson, H.E. Mr. Erastus J. Mwencha and The UN Under-Secretary-General for Field Support, Atul Khare on Tuesday signed two agreements in New York to further strengthen cooperation between the two organisation in the area of peacekeeping support.

The first agreement paves the way for the participation of AU personnel in an Administration and Resource Training Programme designed to foster mission support, leadership and technical skills as well as nurture career development.

Mr. Khare and Mr. Mwencha also agreed to establish a pilot staff exchange programme related to peace support operations. The agreement allows staff members from both organizations to be deployed in each other's respective headquarters for three months to work on peacekeeping logistics, technology, financial and administrative matters.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, H.E. Mr. Mwencha said: "The African Union is encouraged by the continued collaboration with the United Nations. This staff exchange and knowledge sharing initiative is particularly significant as it will enhance our collaboration efforts and augment the value derived from the face-to-face interactions between our staff members. In today's virtual world, face-to face knowledge sharing is a rarity and at AU we welcome and

value the enrichment that this intimate approach will offer to our continued collaboration efforts.

Under-Secretary-General for Field Support, Mr. Atul Khare said: "African peacekeeping contributions are the backbone of our operations. We are committed to strengthening our partnership which enables effective delivery by the African Union for our collective benefit and to reinforcing the operational benefits of cooperation. We look forward to also benefiting from the experience of the African Union through the deployment of their staff members in the Department of Field Support."

Both initiatives were developed by the Department of Field Support as a response to an African Union request to strengthening their capacity in peace operations support.

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