REPORT ON THE OUTCOMES OF THE CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS (CSOs) CONSULTATION IN MASERU ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LIVINGSTONE FORMULA

I. INTRODUCTION

As we celebrate 10 years of the establishment of the PSC, and the implementation of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), we recognize that important progress has been made, as seen in the decline in the number of conflicts on the continent. In spite of this progress, we continue to see the eruption of new conflicts, such as in Central African Republic and Republic of South Sudan, and the increased fragility of post conflict states. In addition to a brief overview of the overall peace and conflict situation in Africa, the civil society forum deliberated on the updates provided on the situations in the Central African Republic and the Republic of South Sudan.

II. CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

Against this background, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) operating in Africa convened in Maseru, the Kingdom of Lesotho, on the 21st February 2014 for a consultative meeting on African Union-CSO relations.

The consultation was held within the context of the programme of the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) for the month of February 2014, under the Chair of Lesotho, which provided for a Retreat of the PSC to review the implementation of the Livingston Formula, and to find ways and means of enhancing the interaction between the PSC and CSOs in the area of peace and security in Africa.

Article 20 of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (2004), and particularly Articles 2 and 7, as well as the broader African definition of human security as articulated in the Introduction of the Common African Defence and Security Policy encourage civil society organizations to participate actively in efforts aimed at promoting peace, security and stability in Africa.

The meeting commended the AU PSC for the efforts in implementing Article 20 of the PSC Protocol and was especially hopeful that the Maseru PSC Retreat will ensure that civil society actors working on peace and security are able to play their role and contribute to the AU’s efforts to address conflict on the continent.

The meeting also recalled previous discussions and conclusions reached around fostering effective interaction and coordination between the PSC and CSOs, including the Conclusions of the Retreat of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union on Working Methods reached in Dakar 5-6 July 2007. The meeting
reviewed the Livingstone Formula \(^1\) and reflected on the modalities of interaction, including procedural aspects outlined under Article 4 of the Formula with a view to identifying challenges that have faced CSOs in complying with the set criteria for membership.

The consultation was also inspired by the Declaration Assembly/AU/Decl.1 (XXI) adopted by the 21\(^{st}\) Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union which called upon the African civil society to continue to play its positive role in promoting peace, security and stability as called for by the PSC Protocol.

### III. THE CASE FOR REVIEWING THE IMPLEMENTTION OF THE LIVINGSTONE FORMULA

The CSOs consultation has established that, despite certain areas of progress, the interaction between the PSC and CSOs has not fully taken advantage of all the opportunities outlined in the Livingstone Formula. It has also highlighted a number of deficiencies in the Formula, which the PSC and broadly the AU need to urgently address.

The consultation identified challenges of access to the PSC, particularly due to the impact of the delay in establishing a formal space for interaction between CSOs and the PSC. One of the assumptions during the adoption of the Livingstone Formula at the 2008 Livingstone PSC Retreat was that ECOSOCC will have developed capacity, readiness and mechanisms to act as an effective focal point in the facilitation of interaction between PSC and CSOs.

To date, ECOSOCC has not been able to co-ordinate and facilitate the expected annual consultative meetings between PSC and CSOs creating barriers for CSOs to meaningfully engage and provide useful inputs into the work of the PSC. In the absence of this facilitation role by ECOSOCC, CSOs have not been able to make any contribution to the bi-annual Report of the Peace and Security Council on its Activities and the State of Peace and Security in Africa, just to give one example.

The meeting noted that measures need to be taken by the AU to ensure that ECOSOCC is operationalized to undertake, in an effective manner, its mandate in respect of the full implementation of the Livingstone Formula.

While noting the increasing interaction of CSOs with the PSC, this engagement remains ad hoc and lacks an institutionalized approach, despite some of the CSOs expertise and proximity to the affected populations in conflict afflicted areas.

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\(^1\) (Conclusions on a Mechanism for the Interaction Between the Peace and Security Council of the African Union and Civil Society Organisations in the Promotion of Peace, Security and Stability in Africa).
The Livingstone Formula identifies a number of areas for CSOs involvement in support of the work of the PSC. However, the experience so far shows that their involvement is limited only to a few areas. For example, provision of support for mediation and peacemaking efforts, provision of regular expertise, advice on early warning and peace support operations and training on the activities and workings of the PSC have not been developed as important areas of CSOs collaboration with the PSC.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

Inspired by the AU vision of building a peaceful, integrated and prosperous Africa, that is free from violent conflicts, the Civil Society Consultation Forum that met in Maseru, ahead of the 6th PSC Retreat, to review the implementation of the Livingstone Formula, makes the following recommendations:

1. The PSC should urgently consider putting in place an **enabling arrangement to facilitate effective implementation of the Livingstone Formula**. In this context, it is further recommended for the PSC to put in place a conflict specific arrangement whereby relevant CSOs dealing with peace and security issues in a given conflict/crisis affected country are afforded opportunity to brief and interact with the PSC. This arrangement will allow for flexible, relevant, inclusive, vibrant and pragmatic implementation of the Livingstone Formula.

2. In light of the economic state of the African continent today, we urge the PSC to apply a **flexible interpretation of Paragraph 4 (B: Modalities of Interaction: Procedural Aspects) of the Livingstone Formula Mechanism Document** which requires that CSOs comply with the ECOSSOC criteria for membership.\(^1\)\(^2\) In this regard, a review and broader application of the modalities of interaction will not only allow for a more robust engagement of the PSC and CSOs, but also provide an opportunity for African philanthropists to support the work of the PSC.

3. The role of the PSC Secretariat in facilitating interaction between the PSC and CSOs should be strengthened.

V. CONCLUSION

The consultation forum called for urgent and renewed efforts towards finding durable solutions to the ongoing conflicts on our continent. It also emphasized the need for action to address the root causes of conflict, including measures for consolidating

\(^2\) (as defined in Article 6 of the Statutes of ECOSOCC).
good governance, deepening of democracy, accelerating socio-economic development and integration, reducing youth unemployment and other drivers of conflict on the continent

As they embark on the activities of 2014, the CSOs commend the efforts of the PSC in strengthening its working methods, as evidenced by the Conclusions of the PSC Retreats held in Yaounde, Cameroon and Djibouti, in November 2012 and February 2013, respectively. The consultation also commended the efforts of the PSC in seeking to enhance its engagement with CSOs, as evidenced by the Maseru Retreat. In particular, the CSOs have learnt with great interest the initiative of the PSC to work towards convening a meeting with CSOs in the course of 2014. As a follow-up to the conclusions to be adopted by the Maseru PSC Retreat, and ahead of the planned PSC-CSOs meeting, CSOs plan to convene a preparatory consultative/capacity building workshop to enhance their knowledge and understanding of the APSA.

Finally, we thank the Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho for all the support, facilitation and warm hospitality extended during this CSOs Consultation Forum on the review of implementation of the Livingstone Formula.

The CSOs consultation forum further extends its gratitude to the Lesotho National Council of NGOs for the facilitation that they provided.

We also acknowledge and deeply appreciate the assistance rendered by the AU Peace and Security Council Secretariat during CSOs Consultation Forum.

**Done in Maseru, Kingdom of Lesotho,**
**21 February 2014**