



PRESS RELEASE

The African Union Commemorates Peace Day withits Partners

21 September 2011, Addis Ababa:The International Day of Peace (Peace Day) was commemorated today at the African Union Headquarters in Addis Ababa. In calling for complete cessation of hostilities around the world, the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon in his remarks, read on his behalf by his Special Representative, Zachary Muburi-Muita, called on combatants around the world to find peaceful solutions to their conflicts.

Reinforcing these sentiments, the AU Commission Chairperson, in a message that was read by the Commissioner for Peace and Security, Ramtane Lamamra called on all Africans to contribute to making sustainable peace a reality, even through the expression of small acts of kindness to one another. "These are the simple things that make this day special," he added.

Speaker after speaker gave a positive assessment of the progress achieved in addressing various conflicts across Africa. Despite many daunting security related challenges facing the continent they predicted a positive outlook in terms of the prospects of Africa achieving sustainable peace and security, which are the bedrock of achieving economic growth and development.

The event took place amidst other activities undertaken by various actors, ranging from African governments, international partners, civil society actors, research institutions, private sector and various grassroot movements to celebrate the day. At the AU headquarters, the day was marked with a special focus on the plight of women and children in armed conflicts, through a symposium organised by United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women).

Reports received by the AU from various quarters indicated increased and widespread uptake of Peace Day and related actions to promote peace across the continent. Every year the celebration of Peace Day provides an opportunity for the AU to assess the progress made in terms of achieving sustainable peace and security as well as to evaluate the challenges faced with an aim towards finding concrete solutions.

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