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PRESS RELEASE

The African Union Commission and United States Conclude Two Unprecedented Meetings

12 June 2013, Addis Ababa: The Commission of the African Union (AU) and the United States Government concluded from 10 to 11 June 2013, two unprecedented meetings, to build on the joint commitments of the AU Commission and United States to increase cooperation. On 10 June, the first meeting of the Peace and Security Technical Working Group took place at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa. This is the first Technical Working Group to take place since this mechanism was established by the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for Cooperation between the AU Commission and the United States Department of State, signed on 1 February 2013. The following day, U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) participated in staff talks with the AU Commission Peace and Security Operations Division, the first time the U.S. military and the Commission have held staff-level consultations.

The U.S.-AU Partnership MoU is centered around the following four pillars or areas of mutual interest: peace and security; democracy and governance; economic growth, trade, and investment; and promotion of opportunity and development. These same pillars make up the bulwark of President Obama's Presidential Policy Directive (PPD) and the subsequent U.S. Strategy toward Sub-Saharan Africa. The U.S.-AUC MoU establishes that a joint Technical Working Group meet in each of these areas to develop and expand relevant cooperation.

The technical meetings centered on the peace and security pillar of the MoU, allowing for in-depth discussions on existing areas of cooperation between the United States and the African Union and, in particular, to identify priority areas to consider expanding cooperation on peace and security matters. Participants include members of USAU, the U.S. State Department and Department of Defence. USAU Ambassador Battle and AU Commission Head for Partnerships Masri opened the talks.

The Staff Talks conducted on June 11 are an effort to formalize the relationship between the AU Peace and Security Department and the U.S. AFRICOM, giving each organization the opportunity to analyze capacity gaps and challenges, as well as discuss potential solutions as a means to developing a framework for future cooperation on many common goals.

The two organizations will establish working groups focusing on planning, Communications, Logistics, and Training and Exercises respectively.

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