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“Whenever Africa takes the lead in solving a problem on the continent with the support of the International Community, it’s often a success” says AU Director for Peace and Security



Addis Ababa, 25th January 2013 – Mr El Ghassim Wane, Director of the Peace and Security Department (PSD) of the African Union Commission (AUC) held a press briefing on 24 January, on the efforts of the AU towards the operationalization of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA).

At the onset, Mr. Wane informed about a recent meeting between AU and ECOWAS aimed at expediting the deployment of the African-led International Support Mission to Mali (AFISMA). Many countries from the region and beyond have pledged to deploy troops. In parallel, the AU will convene a Pledging Conference on Mali on 29 January 2013 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in order to mobilize logistic support and help the force move quickly. Prior to this event, a meeting of the PSC at presidential level on the situation in Mali and on the relations between Sudan and South Sudan will be held on 25th January at the margins of the 20th AU Summit.

Mr Wane further gave a detailed description of the provisions of the Protocol Establishing the Peace and Security Council (PSC) as part of African efforts to enhance the capacity to deal with conflicts. He further touched on the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS), the Panel of the Wise, the African standby Force (ASF – which should reach its full operational capability by 2015), the Peace fund and the mechanisms with the Regional Economic Communities (REC’s) provided for by the Protocol in a bid to monitor situations, prevent crises and implement peace agreements.

The PSC has been fully operational since 2004. It has many successes to its credit despite some shortcomings said Mr Wane. Indeed, since its establishment, the PSC dealt with most of if not all the conflict situations in Africa. As recalled by Director Wane, the Council authorized, in 2004, the deployment of the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) which accounted for the decreased violence and which prepared the ground for the deployment of the joint United Nations-African Union peacekeeping operation in Darfur (UNAMID). He further cited the cases of the AU Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) and more recently, the AFISMA to name but a few. “Whenever Africa takes the lead in solving a problem on the continent with the support of the International Community, it’s often a success” acknowledged Mr Wane. However, he recognized that funding, especially for peacekeeping operations is still a challenge.