

Excellency Minister Momodou Tangara, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Gambia

Excellency Julia Dolly Joiner, Commissioner of Political Affairs

Excellency Ambassador Ferdinand Montcho, Chairperson of the PRC

Excellency Ambassador Sajo Jallow , Ambassador of the Republic of the Gambia to Ethiopia, AU and UNECA.

Excellencies

Ladies and Gentlemen

It gives me great honour and pleasure to be amongst you today in my capacity as the current chair of the Peace and Security Council, participating in this important and much needed retreat, co-organized by the Department of Political Affairs and the AU Peace and Security Council on ensuring Greater Synergies between the African Governance Architecture and the African Peace and Security Architecture, pursuant to the decision of the 18th ordinary session of the AU Executive Council held in January 2011 and the declaration of the 16th session of the AU Assembly held in January 2011 in Addis Ababa.

I am confident that you all would join me in expressing our deepest gratitude for the people and the government of the Republic of the Gambia for their warm hospitality and courtesy that we all have been enjoying since our arrival in the beautiful city of Banjul and allow on your behalf to reiterate our thanks and

appreciation to H.E Minister Momodou Tangara , Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Gambia for the courtesies rendered to us and for his personal presence in this opening ceremony.

Allow me also to express our recognition of the dedicated appreciated effort in organizing this meeting of both our distinguished commissioner who is ending her remarkably successful tenure in her position by another note of success through this brain storming session on a highly crucial issue and for our dear brother and colleague Ambassador Jallow who has given much of his time and effort to take care of all details of this event. Ambassador Jallow is indeed a caring, daring and highly skillful ambassador for his sisterly country.

Dear Colleagues

We definitely take pride in the fact that there is a tremendous improvement in the area of democracy, good governance and the rule of law accomplished in our continent over the past decade; as witnessed by the fair and transparent elections that have been conducted in many of our countries, allow me to refer to the latest in this regards and to congratulate our brothers and sisters in Angola for the successful, fair and transparent elections that were held there recently late last month as testified by AU observers' reports.

Furthermore, peaceful transition of power has also taken place in some of our countries such as Senegal earlier this year. In other

places our peoples had to rise up and claim their rights; we witnessed massive popular uprisings in some countries including my own ,Egypt, where millions protested in the streets and squares of the entire country demanding “bread, Freedom and social justice” proving the link between our peoples’ history of liberation struggle and the quest for freedom, values of good governance, democracy ,respect for human rights and popular participation as both sets of values definitely represent genuine popular aspirations.

Despite these achievements, shortcomings and mishaps have tarnished that bright picture, unfortunately military coups, thought to have vanished in the scrap heap of history had regrettably made a comeback in some countries with subsequent sequels of aborting the electoral process and massive deterioration of the peace and security situation with regional spillovers.

Excellencies

Dear Colleagues

As we reflect on the root causes of the stigmatizing situation that plagues some of our countries labeled as “failed or semi- failed states” as well as the obstacles that hinder the building of efficient and representative state institutions capable of addressing the aspirations of the peoples in some other countries; both in many cases coupled with subsequent regional complications; We come to the conclusion that good governance,

respect of human rights and the rule of law are interlinked to the peace and security issues. Drafters of the protocol establishing the peace and Security Council were well aware of that when they included “promoting and encouraging democratic practices, good governance and the rule of law.” as one of the objectives of the council as stipulated by article 3 (F) of the protocol.

Furthermore, adopting a preventive approach in addressing peace and security problems, which after all proved to be the most cost effective mechanism in this regard, requires a holistic formula that tackles the root causes of conflicts, notably bad governance, lack of democracy, imbalanced regional development and poverty.

Excellencies

Dear Colleagues

The declaration that was adopted by our heads of State and Government in their summit held in Addis Ababa in January 2011 entitled “ Towards Greater Unity and Integration through Shared Values” reconfirms the interlinkage between efforts aiming at promoting peace and security and those promoting the values of good governance, democracy and respect of human rights.

The declaration points out to the importance of achieving greater synergy between peace and security matters and governance and democracy, thereby ensuring that development in the terrain of shared values feature prominently in the peace and Security Council.

Excellencies

Dear Colleagues

In conclusion,

The establishment of the African Architecture on Governance with instruments such as the African Charter on democracy, Elections and Governance and the African Convention on preventing and Combating Corruption demonstrates our belief in the values of democracy and good governance. We are still charged with the task of fully operationalizing and domesticating those instruments within our respective countries to attest to our resolve to adopt them as benchmarks in our endeavor towards achieving continental unity and prosperity.

The importance of post conflict reconstruction can not be overstated; peaceful resolution of conflicts has to be culminated with concrete socioeconomic development projects, capacity building programs, effective and transparent transitional justice arrangements and the establishment of representative state institutions responsive to popular needs and aspirations.

Lastly, It is highly crucial for the future of our peoples to reflect on the linkage and convergence between the peace and security situation in our continent and the good governance, democracy and rule of law and that is exactly why we are here and is our main and sole goal, fulfilling our responsibilities in expressing and defending the wishes and aspirations of our peoples and our obligations in engaging and advising our governments on recommendations and policy options for the way

forward fulfilling and achieving those noble goals and legitimate aspirations .

On that note, I would like to thank you all and wish all participants fruitful deliberations.

Thank you very much..