



PRESS STATEMENT

6th ANNUAL JOINT CONSULTATIVE MEETING BETWEEN THE AFRICAN UNION PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL (AUPSC) AND THE EUROPEAN UNION POLITICAL AND SECURITY COMMITTEE (EUPSC)

Addis Ababa, 11 June 2013

The African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) and the European Union Political and Security Committee (EUPSC) held their 6th Annual Joint Consultative Meeting in Addis Ababa, on 11 June 2013, within the framework of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy. The meeting was co-chaired by Ambassador Rachid Benlounes, Chairperson of the AUPSC for the month of June 2013, and Ambassador Olof Skoog, Permanent Chair of the EUPSC.

The meeting took place in the context of the OAU/AU 50th anniversary year, at a time marked by encouraging developments on the African continent including high economic growth and a steady reduction in conflict, despite several complex political, security and humanitarian crisis situations in West Africa, the Great Lakes region and the Horn of Africa, as well as situations of unconstitutional change of government that require lasting solutions.

The meeting highlighted the need for continued cooperation between the African Union and the European Union to achieve our common goals of ensuring peace and security and promoting democratic governance, respect for human rights, the rule of law, protection of civilians and accountability for war crimes and crimes against humanity. The discussions, focused on Mali/Sahel, Guinea Bissau, Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo and the Great Lakes Regions, Central African Republic and the campaign for the elimination of the Lord's Resistance Army, reaffirmed the commitment of the AUPSC and the EUPSC to enhance joint efforts towards conflict prevention and resolution, the importance of coordinated responses to unconstitutional changes of government and addressing root causes of conflict.

Cooperation AU/EU in Peace and Security

The AUPSC and EUPSC commended the EU's support to the implementation of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), provided through a multi-dimensional approach encompassing political, institutional and financial aspects, with the African Peace Facility (APF) as its core instrument. The AU PSC and EU PSC agreed to promote further operationalization of APSA. The EU reaffirmed its commitment to continue supporting the APSA and the African-led

peace support operations, through the APF. The two parties commended the efforts being deployed by the AU to further mobilise resources from within the continent and from other international partners to better support the ongoing peace initiatives in the continent. The AU PSC and the EUPSC encouraged other partners to also enhance their level of support towards Africa-led peace efforts.

1. On Mali and the Sahel

The AUPSC and the EUPSC underlined their commitment to the unity, territorial integrity, stability, democratic governance, rule of law, respect for human rights, including sustainable development and lasting solution to the multidimensional crisis in Mali, through a holistic approach based on a combination of security, governance, humanitarian and development tracks. Commending the on-going stabilisation efforts, the two parties welcomed progress made on the security track and encouraged further improvements in the humanitarian and human rights situation. Advocating a smooth and harmonised transformation of AFISMA into MINUSMA, they underlined that the new UN mission should build on results achieved by AFISMA thus far and contribute to long term stability in the country by helping Malian forces prepare for the resumption of their responsibilities over the entire territory of Mali. They stressed the importance of Africa's continued role in the search for a durable solution to the crises in Mali and stressed the need to take Africa's concerns into account in the political process in Mali. They welcomed continued efforts by ECOWAS, the core countries and countries of the region to enhance their coordinated contributions to peace, security and development in Mali and in the Sahel-Sahara region.

The two parties recognized the importance of security sector reform, including the restructuring of the Malian Defense and Security Forces, and welcomed the EU's continuing contribution to the stabilisation of Mali through its military training mission (EUTM), and regional capacity building efforts. They took note of the evolution of the political process, as well as the determination of the Malian authorities to hold elections in July 2013, and urged them to intensify dialogue leading to conciliation and restoration of state authority throughout the entire Malian territory. They reiterated their demand for the disarmament of all armed groups in Mali, including the Movement for the National Liberation of Azawad (MNLA). They stressed the importance of organizing free, fair, transparent and inclusive elections, and encouraged international partners to offer their support. They welcomed the significant commitments made at the Mali Donors' Conference held in Brussels, on 15 May 2013. While acknowledging the on-going programmes launched by the EU, they called for honouring of the pledges made. They reiterated the imperative of close coordination among partners in pursuing their collective efforts towards resolving the crises in Mali and the Sahel.

2. On Guinea Bissau

The AUPSC and the EUPSC take note of the appointment of a new inclusive transitional government following agreement between the two major political parties in Guinea Bissau. This transitional government is expected to give priority to the preparation of democratic elections leading to restoration of constitutional order before the end of the year. The meeting welcomed the EU's readiness to provide technical and financial support to the electoral

process, once an appropriate roadmap has been adopted. The two parties stressed the need for reform of armed and security forces. They stressed the need for an effective fight against organised crime and drug trafficking and illegal fishing. They also stressed the need for protection of human rights, rule of law and an end to impunity, and underlined the high importance of the preservation and sustainable management of natural resources of Guinea Bissau, including sustainable exploitation of marine and land resources. They commended the joint efforts of the AU, ECOWAS, CPLP, EU and the UN for the return to constitutional order and stability in Guinea Bissau, and looked forward to the second joint assessment mission on the five Organisations to Guinea Bissau with a view to encouraging the stakeholders to fulfil all conditions for holding free, fair and transparent elections before the end of the year.

3. On Somalia

The AU PSC and EU PSC welcomed the progress made in Somalia since the completion of the Transitional period in August 2012, including the establishment of the Somali Federal Parliament, the endorsement of the Provisional Federal Constitution, the election of the President by the Federal Parliament, the appointment of the Prime Minister and the formation of the Somali Federal Government (SFG). The two parties stressed the need for progress in the dialogue and reconciliation process between Somali stakeholders aiming at establishing regional authorities in Somalia. AUPSC and EUPSC however expressed concern about the resumption of fighting between adverse factions in Kismayo, and urged all those involved to resolve the political stalemate through an inclusive dialogue, led by the SFG, with the support of the AU and IGAD, to advance the federal structure of the country. The meeting commended the SFG and the Somaliland region for their engagement and called for its active continuation.

The AUPSC and EUPSC praised the crucial role of AMISOM in ensuring stabilization in Somalia, allowing the political process to unfold. They acknowledged the need for AMISOM to continue its work with an enhanced logistical and force enablers' capacity to face the new security challenges. AUPSC and EUPSC noted the important role of EUTM in training future Somali military staff, as well as that of EUNAVFOR ATALANTA in countering piracy and of EUCAP NESTOR in supporting maritime security. Furthermore, they welcomed the deployment of the new UN Mission to Somalia and the appointment of the new UN SRSG for the Mission. They stressed the need for close coordination and cooperation between the new UN Mission and AMISOM for the smooth implementation of their respective mandates, for the benefit of peace, security and reconciliation in Somalia.

The AUPSC and EUPSC commended the AU and IGAD joint efforts in Somalia, supported by the international community. In this respect, they welcomed the outcome of the London International Conference on Somalia, held on 7 May 2013, and looked forward to the Brussels Conference that aims at endorsement of Somalia's political reconstruction plan under the framework of a New Deal Transition Compact.

4. On Sudan and South Sudan

The AUPSC and the EUPSC expressed concern about the recent resurgence of tension between Sudan and South Sudan, which is threatening the crucial agreements signed in September 2012. AUPSC and EUPSC underlined the serious consequences an oil shutdown would have on the viability of the two states, the relations between them and the wider region. They stressed the importance of strict and timely implementation of all agreements signed between the two countries as the only way to eventually normalize relations between the two countries, for the benefit of their populations. The meeting urged Sudan and South Sudan to address any complaints or grievances about security concerns through the bilaterally agreed mechanisms. The two parties expressed unwavering support to the AU High-Level Implementation Panel, as well as the appreciation for the work being done by the AUHIP in facilitating negotiations and for its intervention helping to find solutions to defuse the recent tension between the two countries. They also commended the efforts of IGAD and the AU in supporting the Parties.

They called upon Sudan and South Sudan to resume discussions also with a view to reaching agreement on the establishment of the Abyei temporary institutions, as well as agreement on the resolution of the final status of Abyei. The AUPSC and the EUPSC also called on the Parties to address the issue of disputed and claimed border areas, recognizing that this can provide an important platform for cross-border cooperation in the framework of soft borders and regional cooperation and integration. The AUPSC and EUPSC remain concerned about the acute humanitarian situation in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile and called for measures to be taken to address the situation. They welcomed the recent launching of direct talks between the Government of Sudan and SPLM-N, and urged the parties to continue their direct negotiations in order to reach a comprehensive resolution. The AUPSC and EUPSC welcomed the initiative of the AUPSC in undertaking a field mission to Darfur from 17 – 19 March 2013, in the spirit of adding momentum to the peace efforts in Darfur.

5. On Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Great Lakes Region

The meeting expressed concern at the unstable security situation in eastern DRC, particularly in North Kivu, and welcomed the renewed mandate of MONUSCO, which now includes the Intervention Brigade, an innovative joint operation by UN /AU-SADC-ICGLR. The deployment of the Intervention Brigade is expected to improve the situation in the region. In this context, the AU PSC and EU PSC commended the Troop Contributing Countries to the Intervention Brigade, namely, Tanzania, South Africa and Malawi. The two Parties agreed that only an inclusive political solution will bring peace and development to the population after a long period of instability. They welcomed the Framework Agreement for Peace, Security and Cooperation in DRC and the Region signed in Addis Ababa, on 24 February 2013 and called for its full implementation. In this regard, the AUPSC and EUPSC welcomed the first meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism of the Framework Agreement, held in Addis Ababa, on 26 May 2013. They also welcomed the AU PSC field mission to the DRC undertaken from 11 to 14 May 2013.

The EUPSC and AUPSC called on all parties to ensure respect for human rights, as well as an effective fight against impunity in the region. They expressed concern about the lack of

progress in the DRC-M23 negotiations in Kampala, and urged the two Parties to return to the negotiating table, with a view to reaching an agreement.

6. On the Central African Republic (CAR)

The AUPSC and EUPSC expressed deep concern about the security, humanitarian and human rights situation in CAR. The AUPSC and EUPSC reiterated the call for all actors involved to abide by the Libreville Agreements signed in January 2013 and by the subsequent ECCAS N'Djamena Declaration. They called for the reestablishment of public order and security, as the prerequisite for the successful conduct of the transition and for provision of assistance to the needy populations. They underlined the need for the reinstatement of CAR institutions and their effective functioning as a crucial element in preparation of the presidential and legislative elections planned at the end of the 18 month transitional period. They agreed on the necessity for a strengthened peace support operation mission to ensure security and protection of civilians in CAR.

The AUPSC and EUPSC took note of the decision of CAR authorities to allow continuation of the activities of the Regional Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the Lord's Resistance Army, including allowing operations of the contributing foreign Armed Forces.

7. On the Regional Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the Lord's Resistance Army

The AUPSC and the EUPSC deplored the on-going atrocities being committed by the LRA and reaffirmed their support for the UN-AU strategy to eliminate the threat from the LRA, including the AU-Regional Cooperation Initiative. They welcomed the recent progress made in implementing the Regional Cooperation Initiative and in particular, the adoption of the Concept of Operations, the formal incorporation of the military contingents and the establishment of the Headquarters in Yambio, South Sudan.

The AUPSC and EUPSC welcomed the efforts of AU Special Envoy for the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) for the results achieved so far, and called for continued close coordination and cooperation among all stakeholders involved to achieve a smooth implementation of the Initiative.

They agreed to continue to maintain close consultation and cooperation on all these issues.

The two Parties agreed to meet in Brussels, in 2014.