

AFRICAN UNION

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**19TH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT, JULY 9
TO 16, 2012
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**

“AFRICA HELPING AFRICA”

**DECLARATION ON THE LAUNCH OF THE AFRICAN SOLIDARITY INITIATIVE (ASI)
FOR THE MOBILIZATION OF SUPPORT FOR POST-CONFLICT
RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA**

1. We, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs/External Relations and other representatives of the Member States of the African Union (AU) today launched the African Solidarity Initiative (ASI), with the view to mobilizing enhanced support from within the continent for post-conflict reconstruction and development in countries emerging from conflict.
2. The launching took place within the context of the implementation of the AU Policy on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD), adopted in Banjul, in June 2006, which aims at improving timeliness, effectiveness and coordination of activities in post-conflict countries and to lay the foundation for social justice and sustainable peace. This event is also part of the follow-up to Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.408(XVIII), adopted by the Assembly of the Union, at its 18th Ordinary Session, held in Addis Ababa, from 29 to 30 January 2012, which stressed the need for renewed efforts towards post-conflict reconstruction and development in order to consolidate peace where it has been achieved, as well as on the outcomes of the assessment missions conducted by the Commission, with the support of the African Development Bank (AfDB), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the European Union, to several AU Member States in a post-conflict phase.
3. While acknowledging the milestones accomplished in our common objective of a conflict-free Africa, we are also mindful of the need, for renewed efforts towards post-conflict reconstruction and peace building, in order to sustain the hope and gains that come with the end of violence, in addition to addressing existing crises and conflicts. Indeed, as experience



indicates, in the early phase of the transition from conflict to peace, the risk of relapse into violence is high as countries emerging from conflicts are often characterized by weakened capacity at all levels, destroyed institutions, governance challenges and poverty.

4. In launching the ASI, we aim at giving a new impetus to Africa's efforts in the area of post-conflict reconstruction and development, building on steps already taken by individual Member States, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and other stakeholders, as part of our strategy towards growth, renewal and sustainable development. Our objective is also to promote African solidarity, mutual assistance and regional integration, and propel the continent to a higher level of development and self-confidence, driven by the motto: 'Africa helping Africa'.

5. Aware that successful post-conflict reconstruction and development demand long-term commitments, collective efforts and African ownership as well as leadership, we, hereby, launch the African Solidarity Initiative, as a flagship continental programme, in support, to the following pilot countries: Burundi, Central African Republic, Cote d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Sudan and South Sudan.

6. More specifically, the ASI shall pursue the following objectives:

- (i) to deepen the essence of African solidarity and promote a paradigm shift which center-stages African mutual assistance as a key dimension for enhanced and effective development of the continent;
- (ii) to encourage, motivate, and empower African countries to offer support to the pilot countries listed above and to other Member States as the process expands;
- (iii) to provide a unique opportunity for generating additional "out of the box" ideas for addressing PCRD challenges, by actively involving African countries, relevant organizations/institutions, parastatal, private sector, academia, civil society, faith-based organisations, African experts, and the Diaspora;
- (iv) to promote intra-African solutions to the complex challenges of post-conflict reconstruction; and
- (v) to contribute towards a renewed sense of urgency in consolidating peace where it has been achieved.



7. The ASI shall institute a coordinated and expanded platform aimed at increasing contributions in support to PCRD activities in Africa through:

- (i) mobilizing, where feasible, financial contributions and, more importantly, in-kind contributions from African countries and other stakeholders from within and beyond the continent;
- (ii) developing a processes for mutual sharing of technical expertise and capacity building.

8. We request the Commission, in close consultation with the beneficiary countries, the RECs and other relevant African institutions and stakeholders, as well as partners, to prepare a three-year roadmap for the implementation of the ASI, including:

- (i) launching an awareness raising campaign on the Initiative, to build a broad-based support for the achievement of its objectives, operational modalities and activities;
- (ii) dispatching regular advocacy, lobbying and sensitization missions to relevant bilateral and multi-lateral partners, including non-traditional ones, for debt relief and other related kinds of support;
- (iii) undertaking an inventory of key African training institutions and existing technical cooperation schemes, with a view of facilitating the provision by the Member States concerned of support to the beneficiary countries on the basis of their expressed needs and priorities;
- (iv) facilitating the deployment by African countries of experts in key areas of need for post-conflict countries, building on the Inter-Africa Convention Establishing an African Technical Cooperation Programme adopted by the Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), held in Kampala, from 28 July to 1st August 1975; and
- (v) formulating knowledge products for dissemination, in support of the development of appropriate national and regional strategies and activities by the beneficiary countries.



9. In addition, we welcome the other steps envisaged by the Commission, on the basis of its consultations with the beneficiary countries, towards the holding of events relevant to their needs, including:

- (i) an investment forum, with a view to encouraging the African private sector and individual actors to play an active role in contributing towards the reconstruction and development efforts in the countries concerned;
- (ii) a security sector reform workshop, to share experiences, with the participation of African countries that have successfully carried out such exercise;
- (iii) a retreat of the national bodies/organs in charge of national reconciliation, justice and healing, to learn from each other's experience, as well as from other relevant processes in the continent;
- (iv) a forum on infrastructure development, as part of the overall AU-led Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA);
- (v) a capacity-building programme on governance, including management of natural resources and other related activities; and
- (vi) convening of an African Solidarity Conference to mobilize further financial and in-kind contributions for the beneficiary countries.

10. We request the Commission to extend this programme to other AU Member States in post-conflict phase. In this respect, we encourage the countries concerned to communicate their priority needs to the Commission.

11. We request the Commission to take all the necessary steps for the effective implementation and coordination of the ASI and the above-mentioned activities. In this respect, we stress the critical importance of continued interaction with the beneficiary countries. Equally important is the need for a strong partnership with the RECs, the AfDB, the UN system, including the UN Peace-building Commission and its Support Office, UNECA, UNDP, UNHCR, as well as the World Bank, the EU and other bilateral and multilateral stakeholders.

12. We stress that the ASI is conceived as a process aimed at encouraging further support by Africa's international partners, in a collaborative effort to address stabilization and development on the continent. We reiterate our appreciation to all partners extending support to post-conflict support on the continent and encourage them to pursue and enhance their contribution.



13. As this year is the 10th anniversary of our Union, whilst 2013 will mark the 50th anniversary of the creation of the OAU, we pledge to do everything in our power to take forward and enhance the spirit of pan-Africanism, solidarity and African renaissance encapsulated in the ASI, through the timely and effective implementation of this flagship programme.

14. We request the Commission to submit regular reports on the implementation of the ASI to the relevant AU policy organs, as well as to undertake a mid-term assessment in order to assess the progress made and the challenges encountered.

Done in Addis Ababa, 13th July 2012

