Press Release

Chairperson receives African Union Special Envoy on the political crisis in Côte d’Ivoire, Prime Minister Raila Odinga of Kenya

The Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC), Dr. Jean Ping, received in his office at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa on 28 January 2011, the AU Special Envoy on the political crisis in Côte d’Ivoire, H.E. Mr. Raila Odinga, Prime Minister of the Republic of Kenya.

On this occasion, Prime Minister Odinga submitted his report and recommendations to the Chairperson, who thanked him for his untiring efforts to help find a peaceful and lasting solution to the political stalemate in Côte d’Ivoire.

Both leaders exchanged views on the situation on the ground and stressed the importance of reaching a peaceful settlement of the Ivorian crisis, in the interest of the peace-loving people of Côte d’Ivoire.

It is worth recalling that Prime Minister Raila Odinga had been requested by the Chairperson to follow through the situation in Côte d’Ivoire and strengthen the chances of success of efforts to find a peaceful solution to the country’s post-election political crisis.

In that capacity, he travelled to Côte d’Ivoire and met with the outgoing President, Mr. Laurent Gbagbo and the President-elect, Mr. Alassane Ouattara, as well as with the leadership of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

The Prime Minister was accompanied to the meeting by a high-level delegation, including Kenya’s Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, Prof. George Kinuthia Saitoti, while the AU side included the Peace and Security Commissioner, Ambassador Ramtane Lamamra and the Chief of Staff in the Bureau of the Chairperson, Ambassador John Kayode Shinkaiye.

The Chairperson later briefed the AU Peace and Security Council, meeting at the level of Heads of State and Government, on the situation in Côte d’Ivoire and the Council agreed to set up a High-level Panel to meet with both Ivorian parties and report back to the PSC within a month. The recommendations of the Panel will be reviewed and endorsed by the Council and will be binding on all parties involved in the crisis.

Addis Ababa, 29 January 2011