



PRESS RELEASE

THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE UNION EXPRESSES DEEP CONCERN AT THE CONTINUING CONFLICT IN LIBYA

AU reiterates its determination to seek a political solution and calls on its partners to support its efforts

Malabo, 21 July 2011: As part of the efforts of the African Union (AU) to find a political solution to the conflict in Libya, the Chairman of the Union, President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo of Equatorial Guinea, received, on 20 July 2011, a Libyan Government delegation headed by Mr. Juma Amer, Secretary for African Affairs.

Prior to this audience, the Libyan delegation met the Chairperson of the AU Commission, Dr. Jean Ping, in Bata, Equatorial Guinea. It also participated in the technical interaction with the AU *ad hoc* Committee on Libya, in Addis Ababa, on 19 July 2011, to discuss the developments in the situation in Libya and efforts to find a political solution in the context of the Proposals endorsed by the 17th Ordinary session of the Assembly of the Union, held in Malabo, from 30 June to 1st July 2011.

The Libyan delegation briefed the Chairperson of the Union on the latest developments in Libya, including the continuing NATO-led bombing campaign and the resulting impact on the civilian population. It reiterated the Government's commitment to work towards a political solution within the framework of the AU Roadmap and Proposals.

The Chair of the Union seized the opportunity of the meeting to, once again, express AU's deep concern over the continuing conflict in Libya and its far-reaching consequences for that country and the region as a whole. He reaffirmed AU's conviction that only a political solution will make it possible to fulfill the legitimate aspirations of the Libyan people and preserve the unity and territorial integrity of the country, as well as regional peace and stability. In this context, he underscored the fact that the AU Proposals, as unanimously adopted by the Assembly following extensive deliberations, constitute a viable basis for a way forward of the current conflict.

Against this background, the Chairperson of the Union welcomed the continued engagement of the Libyan Government with the AU, in particular its participation in the Addis Ababa technical consultations. He encouraged the Government to submit, as early as possible, its written observations on the AU Proposals, to facilitate the early commencement of negotiations between the parties with a view to finding a negotiated and political solution to the conflict.

The Chairperson of the Union urged the Transitional National Council (TNC) of Libya, building on the exchanges that took place in Malabo, on the margins of the Summit, to extend the necessary cooperation to the *ad hoc* Committee and continue to engage with it in order to speedily bring the current conflict to an end. He expressed the hope that the TNC will respond positively to the invitation to participate in a technical interaction on the AU Proposals, in Addis Ababa, in early August.

The Chairperson of the Union called on AU's partners to extend the necessary cooperation to the efforts being exerted by the *ad hoc* Committee and to support the Proposals put forward in Malabo. In this respect, he expressed concern at the decisions of the last meeting of the Libya Contact Group in Istanbul, which have the potential of further complicating the search for a political solution.