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**EXPERT CONSULTATION WITH POLICY MAKERS OF THE RELEVANT AU
ORGANS ON TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE
PRESS RELEASE N°101/2011**



Cape Town, 8 September 2011: Facilitating transition to democracy and good governance, and promoting justice and reconciliation are central to the mandate and objectives of the African Union Commission (AUC) of the African Union.

In adopting the African Union Policy Framework on Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development, the AU has recognized the added value of a collective and coordinated approach to transitional justice and governance.

The spread and intensity of democratic values, promotion of the culture of constitutionalism, and transition from conflict to stability on the continent, demands urgent actions to develop the required capacity and mechanism to support and complement the efforts of Member States to engender and implement their reconstruction agenda.

Against this backdrop, the Commission of the African Union has initiated the reflection process of strengthening the AU leadership and providing support to Member States in implementing their reconstruction agenda.

In order to develop a set of guidelines to shape the process of developing the AU Transitional Justice Framework, a series of expert consultations are proposed. One of them is an expert consultation with policy makers of the relevant AU organs on transitional justice, which is being held in cooperation with the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR) in South Africa.

This consultation is aimed at identifying and consolidating the views of the various initiatives of the African Union organs particularly the Department of Political Affairs (DPA), Legal Counsel and Department of Peace and Security of the AUC. Dr. Mamadou Dia, Head of the Division of Governance, Human Rights and Elections (DGHRE) at the AUC and Dr. Hugo van der Merwe, Transitional Justice Programme Manager, CSVR are officiating at the meeting.

“The topic of Transitional Justice is very controversial, very sensitive, as it is often seen as allowing for the influence of international actors. We need a balance between international and regional proposals in making Transitional Justice attractive and inclusive” said Dr. Dia at the meeting opening ceremony. He noted that DPA has been engaging with CSVr since 2008.

The participants at the meeting will share and consolidate the divergent understandings of the contemporary application of transitional justice in Africa and the role of the AU in that regard. Two presentations will be discussed; an overview of the current transitional justice processes and mechanisms in Africa-challenges and prospects and the role of the AU organs in transitional justice processes in Africa.

The participants will also discuss and propose possible guidelines and practical steps towards the development of a policy framework on transitional justice in Africa, taking into consideration the draft report of the Panel of the Wise on “Non-Impunity, Justice and National Reconciliation”.

The meeting comprises participants from AUC, CSVr, Pan African Lawyers Union, Foundation for Human Rights, UN Women, and other experts. The meeting will conclude on 10 September 2011.

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