



DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

**CONSULTATION WITH MEMBER STATES' EXPERTS ON TRANSITIONAL
JUSTICE
PRESS RELEASE N°102/2011**



Cape Town, 12 September 2011 An experts' consultation with policy makers from AU member states emerging from conflict started in Cape Town on 12 September, with the aim to ensure that deliberations and proposals

from the AU organs on possible guidelines towards the development of policy framework on transitional justice is rooted and anchored on the needs and specific contents of member states.

Mrs. Julia Dolly Joiner, Commissioner for Political Affairs at the African Union Commission (AUC), delivered the opening statement

"These consultations aretimely and appropriate in the context of the recent political and legal developments mushrooming in all corners of our beloved continent. In particular, the events in North Africa reaffirm our collective need to guarantee and respect human and peoples' rights, the rule of law, free and fair elections, good governance and to upscale efforts towards achieving sustainable peace and development on the continent," said the Commissioner in her statement.

Commissioner Joiner reaffirmed the need for greater African coherence, understanding and ownership of transitional justice. She also underscored that establishing an African Policy Framework on Transitional Justice provides, perhaps, the best hope for coherence and African ownership in all areas of transitional justice aimed at achieving the ultimate goal of building sustainable peace in Africa.

Ms. Ntsiki Sisulu-Singapi, Board Member of the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR) also addressed the opening ceremony. She briefed the participants about the history of CSVR.

The first session of the meeting was chaired by Ambassador Emile Ognimba, Director for Political Affairs, AUC. He briefed participants from Member States about

the needs for the AU for policy framework on transitional justice and noted that transitional justice cannot be delivered to people without democratic processes. "We have not exhausted our own understanding of transitional justice. It goes beyond political accountability," the Director said.

In this session, Member States of the African Union briefly shared their transitional justice processes and mechanisms including challenges and prospects.

The second session was a presentation on contemporary understanding and application of transitional justice in Africa, opportunities and issues for consideration in developing a policy for the African continent presented by Ms. Nahla Valji from UN Women. She spoke about the importance of using the AU policy on transitional justice as an opportunity for gender justice.

The third session was dedicated to proposed African Transitional Justice Policy Framework and was addressed by Professor Gilbert Khadiagala. During discussions participants confirmed that transitional justice is not new to the continent and deliberated on how an African transitional justice policy would add to existing frameworks.

The consultation will continue tomorrow, 13 September 2011, and will discuss the principles and elements of an effective African transitional justice policy framework and the way forward.

###