

AFRICAN UNION  
الاتحاد الأفريقي



UNION AFRICAINE  
UNIÃO AFRICANA

---

P.O. Box: 3243, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Tel.:(251-11) 551 38 22 Fax: (251-11) 551 93 21  
Email: [situationroom@africa-union.org](mailto:situationroom@africa-union.org)

---

11<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE PANEL OF THE WISE OF THE AFRICAN UNION  
ZANZIBAR, UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

6-7 DECEMBER 2011

POW/PR/COMM(XI)

COMMUNIQUÉ



## COMMUNIQUÉ

The Panel of the Wise of the African Union (AU), which is one of the pillars of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), as provided for by the Peace and Security Council (PSC) Protocol, held its 11<sup>th</sup> meeting in Zanzibar, United Republic of Tanzania, from 6 to 7 December 2011. The meeting was chaired by Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim, former Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), on behalf of the Chairperson of the Panel, Mr. Ahmed Ben Bella, who could not attend. Ambassador Ramtane Lamamra, AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, addressed the opening ceremony. Also in attendance were representatives of the East African Community (EAC), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

The Panel reviewed the state of peace and security in Africa on the basis of the update provided by the Commissioner. It also received a briefing from former President Pierre Buyoya on the efforts of the AU High-Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) on Sudan with respect to the ongoing post-secession negotiations, the situation in the Sudan and other aspects of the AUHIP mandate.

The Panel discussed the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), especially the presidential and legislative elections of 28 November 2011, in the light of the two visits it undertook to the DRC in October and November 2011. Having recalled the joint communiqué on the conduct of the elections, issued by the observation teams of the AU, COMESA, ECCAS, SADC and the Secretariat of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, the Panel strongly appealed to all the Congolese stakeholders to exercise utmost restraint and to demonstrate a high sense of responsibility in this particularly delicate period. It urged the electoral commission and all other stakeholders to act in a manner that would enhance confidence in the electoral process and consolidate the democratic process. It stressed the obligation that befalls all those who may dispute the results of the election to do so exclusively through the mechanisms and processes provided for that end. The Panel requested the PSC and the Chairperson of the Commission to continue to closely monitor the situation and to take all necessary initiatives to help the Congolese come together in the aftermath of the elections.

The Panel welcomed the progress made on the ground by the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the forces of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG). It paid tribute to the Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) for their unwavering commitment to the cause of peace in



Somalia and for the sacrifices made. The meeting commended IGAD and its Member States, as well as the Commission, for the efforts being made to strengthen AMISOM, including the planned re-hating of the Kenyan troops currently conducting operations, jointly with the TFG forces, in South Central Somalia.

The Panel also expressed satisfaction at the conclusion of the Kampala Accord of June 2011 and the subsequent Roadmap agreed to in Mogadishu, in early September 2011. The Panel emphasized the need to expedite the implementation of the political process and urged the Somali stakeholders to fully honor the commitments made in a timely manner, in order to complete the pending transitional tasks by August 2012. The Panel requested the AU Commission and IGAD to do whatever is within their power to facilitate the implementation of the Agreements reached among the Somali stakeholders.

The Panel reiterated the responsibility of the international community at large towards the people of Somalia, noting that, regrettably, their plight has remained a low priority on the international agenda. Accordingly, the Panel called on the United Nations to fully shoulder the responsibility entrusted to it regarding the maintenance of international peace and security. This entails the provision of adequate support to AMISOM, as repeatedly requested by the PSC, to enable the Mission more effectively carry out its mandate, and for the implementation of the Roadmap, as well as the provision of the necessary humanitarian assistance to the affected populations.

Regarding the ongoing efforts to address the post-secession issues between the Sudan and South Sudan, the Panel strongly appealed to the parties to display the leadership and sense of responsibility expected of them, by speedily reaching agreement on all the outstanding issues and fully implementing all the commitments made.

The Panel fully associated itself with the communiqué issued by the PSC at its 302<sup>nd</sup> meeting held on 30 November 2011, particularly with respect to: (i) the imperative of promoting and sustaining democracy in both the Sudan and South Sudan, to address, in a meaningful way, the challenge of governance in conditions of diversity; (ii) the resolution of the pending issues in the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), especially in Blue Nile and South Kordofan; (iii) the adoption of a holistic approach to the issues of peace, justice and reconciliation in the Sudan; and (iv) unhindered humanitarian access to populations in need. The Panel expressed deep appreciation for the work of the AUHIP, encouraged it to persevere in its efforts and assured it of its readiness to support its work in whatever way is deemed necessary. It also commended the Chairperson of the Commission for the visit he recently undertook to Khartoum to discuss issues of common concern with the Sudanese authorities.

The Panel welcomed the decision taken by the PSC, at its 20 October 2011 meeting, regarding the need to support, in whatever possible way, the ongoing transition process in Libya, including through the establishment of an AU Liaison Office. The Panel took note with satisfaction of the formation of a new Government in Libya and the expressed commitment of the Libyan authorities to promote reconciliation. The Panel expressed its readiness to contribute to the ongoing efforts, including through a visit to Libya as soon as possible.

The Panel also exchanged views on the ongoing transitions in Egypt and Tunisia, in light of the visits it undertook to those two countries in April and May 2011. The Panel noted with satisfaction the progress made in the two countries, particularly with the organization of elections that would pave the way for the establishment of democratically-elected and accountable Governments. The Panel called on all stakeholders to persevere in their efforts to ensure that the expectations generated by the popular uprisings in both Tunisia and Egypt are indeed fulfilled.

The Panel welcomed the progress made in Côte d'Ivoire, since the assumption of power by President Alassane Dramane Ouattara. The Panel encouraged the Commission to pursue the efforts initiated to support post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding in Côte d'Ivoire, particularly through the launching of an African solidarity Initiative that will commence with a Solidarity Conference to mobilize assistance from within the continent. The Panel stressed the critical role of the Commission on Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation set up by the Ivorian authorities, and called on all African countries in a position to do so, as well as international partners, to fully support the work of the Commission, including through the provision of expertise and financial contributions. The Panel expressed its readiness to undertake a visit to Côte d'Ivoire as soon as possible to support the efforts of the Ivorian authorities and other actors.

The Panel also exchanged views on its thematic report on women and children in armed conflicts. The report will be submitted, in due course, to the relevant AU organs for consideration and adoption. The Panel also agreed to submit its recommendations on an African Framework on Non-Impunity, Justice and National Reconciliation to Member States, as a guideline on the basis of which they could, whenever necessary, articulate responses to the challenges of peace, justice and reconciliation.

The 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Panel was preceded, from 5 to 6 December 2011, by a workshop on the theme: *"Strengthening political governance for peace, security and stability in Africa"*, organized with the support of the Nairobi-based African Leadership Centre. The workshop, which was attended by members of the Panel of the Wise, eminent African personalities, including former Presidents Pierre Buyoya, Thabo Mbeki, and Pedro Pires, representatives of Regional Economic Communities (RECs), civil society organizations and think tanks, as well as



partners, was opened by the Tanzanian Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Bernard Membe.

This workshop took place as a follow-up to the communiqué of the 275<sup>th</sup> meeting of the PSC, held in Addis Ababa, on 26 April 2011, which requested the Panel to undertake a comprehensive review of the existing mechanisms relating to democratization and governance in Africa, in order to make concrete recommendations to the PSC. The PSC decision was taken against the background of the popular uprisings in North Africa, which, as stressed by the AU policy organs, provide a unique opportunity to deepen the democratization processes on the continent.

The Panel reviewed the initial recommendations of the workshop and agreed to deepen its reflection, through broader consultations with all stakeholders, including the Pan-African Parliament, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, the RECs, African think tanks, academic institutions and civil society organizations. In the meantime, the Panel encouraged the African civil society organizations to contribute actively to this process by generating debates and discussions at grassroots level, as well as by contributing to the monitoring of the implementation of relevant AU instruments on governance and democracy, including through the development of a compliance index that can leverage on information and communications technologies, as recommended by the second High-Level AU Retreat on the promotion of peace, security and stability, held in Cairo, Egypt, from 4 to 5 September 2011.

Finally, the Panel of the Wise expresses its most sincere appreciation and gratitude to the Tanzanian Government and people, as well as to the authorities of Zanzibar, for their warm welcome and all the facilities provided for the successful holding of the workshop and the 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Panel.

## NOTE TO THE EDITORS

***About the establishment of the Panel of the Wise:*** The Panel of the Wise of the African Union (AU) was established in pursuance of Article 11 of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the AU. The Panel is mandated to support the efforts of the PSC and those of the Chairperson of the Commission, particularly in the area of conflict prevention. In this respect, and based on the Modalities for its Functioning, as adopted by the PSC at its 100<sup>th</sup> meeting, held on 12 November 2007, the Panel may, *inter alia*, advise the PSC and/or the Chairperson of the Commission on all matters within their respective competences; carry out fact-finding missions as an instrument of conflict prevention; encourage parties, where appropriate, to engage in political dialogue; and promote confidence-building measures. The Panel may also pronounce itself on any issue relating to the promotion and maintenance of peace, security and stability in Africa.

***About the composition of the Panel of the Wise:*** At its 10<sup>th</sup> Ordinary session, held in Addis Ababa from 29 to 30 January 2007, the Assembly of the Union appointed the following personalities as members of the Panel of the Wise for a period of three years: Ahmed Ben Bella, former President of Algeria, representing the Northern region; Miguel Trovoada, former President of Sao Tomé and Príncipe, representing the Central region; Salim Ahmed Salim, former Prime Minister of the United Republic of Tanzania and Secretary-General of the OAU, representing the Eastern region; Brigalia Bam, Chairperson of the Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa, representing the Southern region; and Elisabeth Pognon, former President of the Constitutional Court of Benin, representing the Western region.

As the term of the first members of the Panel came to an end on 18 December 2010, the Assembly of the Union, meeting in Kampala, Uganda, in July 2010, appointed the following personalities to compose the current Panel of the Wise: Mr. Ahmed Ben Bella; Dr. Kenneth Kaunda, former President of Zambia, representing the Southern African region; Ms. Marie-Madeleine Kalala-Ngoy, former Minister for Humanitarian Affairs of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, representing the Central African region; Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim; and Dr. Mary Chinery-Hesse of Ghana, former Assistant Secretary-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO), representing the West African region. In order to enhance the effectiveness of the Panel, the Assembly also approved the establishment of a Group of Friends of the Panel of the Wise, comprising Mr. Miguel Trovoada, Dr. Brigalia Bam, and Mrs. Elisabeth Pognon.

***About the activities of the Panel:*** As part of its activities, the Panel maintains close consultations with the PSC and the Chairperson of the Commission. It held a number of meetings with both the PSC and the Chairperson to exchange on the conflict and crisis situations on the continent and efforts to address them.



The Panel has also undertaken field missions to a number of countries, including countries preparing elections, as part of the efforts towards conflict prevention through the deepening of the democratization processes. It is within this framework that the Panel undertook a mission to the DRC in October and November 2011, ahead of the presidential and legislative elections of 28 November 2011. Earlier in the year, the Panel visited Tunisia and Egypt, as part of the AU support to the transition process in those two countries.

The Panel has also undertaken a number of thematic reflections on issues relevant to conflict prevention and/or peace building. It is against this background that the Panel initiated thematic reflections on (i) election-related disputes and conflicts and (ii) on impunity, justice and national reconciliation, (iii) women and children in armed conflicts; and (iv) democratization and governance.

The decision to reflect on election-related disputes was taken following the post-electoral crisis that occurred in Kenya in December 2007. Indeed, while elections are the hallmark of representative democracy, they are also competitive processes that can unleash conflict intentions which, if not constructively managed, can potentially destabilize the fabric of States and societies. The report of the Panel and its recommendations were adopted in July 2009, by the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government.

The decision to initiate a thematic reflection on the problem of fighting impunity and its relationship to truth, justice and reconciliation in Africa was taken at the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Panel, held in Nairobi, in November 2008. It was informed by the renewed debate on this topic and the need to address the different issues involved in a comprehensive and mutually-supportive manner.

The choice of the topic of women and children in armed conflicts was informed by the empirical evidence accumulated over decades confirming that women and children suffer most wherever and whenever there is a breakdown of social order, rule of law and ascendance of violence.

The decision to devote a thematic reflection to the implications of the popular uprisings in North Africa for the democratization processes in Africa is in response to the request made by the 275<sup>th</sup> meeting of the PSC, held in Addis Ababa, on 26 April 2011. In the Declaration adopted on that occasion, the PSC expressed its conviction that the uprisings in North Africa should be used as an opportunity for Member States to renew their commitment to the AU democratic and governance agenda, give added momentum to efforts deployed in this respect, and implement the political and socio-economic reforms which are called for in every particular national situation. It requested the AU Panel of the Wise to undertake a comprehensive review, including the early convening of a workshop bringing together relevant stakeholders, of the existing mechanisms relating to democratisation and governance in Africa, and make



recommendations to it. This request was welcomed by the Extraordinary Summit of the AU Heads of State and Government, held in Addis Ababa, on 26 May 2011.

***About cooperation with similar African bodies:*** The Panel works closely with the Regional Economic Communities (RECs). In this respect, the Panel coordinates its initiatives and undertook joint activities with the Committee of Elders of COMESA, the Council of the Wise of ECOWAS, as well as the Secretariats of IGAD, SADC and the ICGLR. Joint missions were undertaken to Egypt with COMESA, and to the DRC with COMESA, ECCAS, ICGLR and SADC.