

PRESSE RELEASE

**SIGNING CEREMONY OF THE AGREEMENTS ON THE DELIMITATION OF MARITIME BORDERS BETWEEN THE UNION OF THE COMOROS, THE REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE AND THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA**



**Maputo, Mozambique, 5 December 2011** - The African Union (AU), through its Border Programme, took part in the signing ceremony of the Agreements on the delimitation of maritime borders between the Comoros, Mozambique and Tanzania, at the Ponta Vermelha Presidential Palace, in Maputo, Mozambique, on 5 December 2011.

Since the launch of the AU Border Programme (AUBP) in 2007, significant progress has been made in the area of border delimitation and demarcation in the continent. Regarding the maritime boundaries, the delimitation of the border between The Comoros and Mozambique, The Comoros and Tanzania, The Comoros and Seychelles, as well as between Seychelles and Mauritius should be noted. The following bilateral and multilateral Agreements have been developed:

- the Agreement on the delimitation of the maritime border between the Republic of Mozambique and the Union of The Comoros;

- the Agreement on the delimitation of the maritime border between the United Republic of Tanzania and the Union of The Comoros;
- the Agreement on the delimitation of the maritime border between the United Republic of Tanzania and the Republic of Mozambique; and
- the Agreement between the Union of The Comoros, the Republic of Mozambique and the United Republic of Tanzania on the Indian Ocean triple point.

These delimitation Agreements were signed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Republic of Mozambique, the Minister of Transport and Tourism of the Union of The Comoros and the Minister for Lands and Housing Development of the United Republic of Tanzania, in the presence of Their Excellencies **Armando Emilio Guebuza**, President of the Republic of Mozambique, **Dr. Ikililou Dhoinine**, President of the Union of The Comoros, and Honourable **Mizengo Kayanza Peter Pinda**, Prime Minister of the United Republic of Tanzania, during a ceremony at the Ponta Vermelha Presidential Palace.

Ambassador Aguibou Diarrah, Head of the AUBP Unit within the AU Commission, the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany in Mozambique, H.E. Ulrich Kloeckner, whose country provides crucial financial and technical support to the AUBP, and the Ambassadors and Heads of Diplomatic Missions accredited to Mozambique also attended the ceremony.

It should be recalled that the signing of these Agreements, the first of its kind in maritime delimitation under the auspices of the AU, is the culmination of a process that officially took shape during the tripartite meeting, organized under the auspices of the AU on the sidelines of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Conference of African Ministers in charge of Border Issues, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 22 to 25 March 2010. This act marks a new step in the implementation of AUBP, one of whose main objectives is the delineation and demarcation of borders where such an exercise has not yet taken place by 2017, as decided by the 17<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union held in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, from 30 June to 1 July 2011. The aim, through the attainment of this objective, as well as the related objective of cross-border cooperation, is to promote the structural prevention of conflicts, by eliminating disputes that may arise as a result of undefined boundary lines, and the deepening of regional and continental integration.

The signing of these Agreements is a further testimony to the commitment of the Governments of these three countries to the objectives and principles of the Constitutive Act of the AU on the promotion and consolidation of peace, security and stability among African states.



These Agreements also fall within the ambit of the enhancement of solidarity and cross-border cooperation in the Indian Ocean, for a sustainable and concerted management of marine resources.

The Commission reiterates the determination of the AU to intensify its efforts to assist Member States, not only in the process of defining their land, maritime, river and lake boundaries, but also in the related process of the promotion of cross-border cooperation.

The AU will, through the AUBP, continue to support all efforts to prevent conflicts and promote peace and stability on the continent.

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