



PRESS STATEMENT

Addis Ababa 19 December 2011: The Peace and Security Department of the African Union Commission and the Secretariat of the League of the Arab States (LAS) held a consultative meeting at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa on 19 December 2011. The meeting was co-chaired by Ambassador Ramtane Lamamra, AU Commissioner for Peace and Security and Ambassador Samir AlKassir, Assistant Secretary-General of the League of Arab States for Peace and Security.

The meeting was graced by the presence of the Chairperson of the AU Commission, Dr Jean Ping, who called for more effort to strengthen cooperation between the AU and LAS in the peace and security domain, as well as in the economic sector, stressing both the pioneering character and uniqueness nature of the African-Arab Trade world strategic partnership.

The meeting was held within the spirit and outcomes the Afro-Arab Summit held in Sirte, Libya, in October 2010, and the inaugural meeting of the AU Peace and Security Council and the LAS Peace and Security Council, held in Cairo on 18-19 December 2010.

The meeting provided an opportunity for both sides to exchange views on crisis and conflict situations, namely Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan and the Arab-Israel conflict. The two sides hailed the ongoing efforts to find lasting solutions to the crisis in Sudan and Somalia and exchanged on how best to further coordination between their respective actions on these areas.

On Sudan and South Sudan, they emphasized the need to speed up efforts towards the resolution of post-secession outstanding issues between Sudan and South Sudan in line with the overriding and agreed principle of two viable States, at peace with, and mutually supportive of, one another.

On Somalia, they commended the gallant efforts of the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and urged the Somali political leadership and stakeholders to fully and timely honour their commitments with a view to achieving early and effective reconciliation and lasting peace in their country. They also resolved to more closely work together to assist the Transitional

Federal Government (TFG) in satisfactorily implementing the tasks of the transition and face the challenges in the political, security and humanitarian fields.

On the Arab-Israel conflict, the two sides commended the initiatives of the Arab League towards a just and comprehensive solution, including the fulfillment of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people and the liberation of all the occupied Arab territories, to the borders of 4 June 1967, including the Syrian Golan Heights and South Lebanon. They reiterated the support of their Member States to the Palestinian effort aimed at securing the status of Member State in the United Nations.

On cooperation, the two sides underscored the need to enhance their cooperation in the peace and security domain, in particular, and other areas of common interest, in general. In this context, they look forward to the convening of the 2nd joint meeting between the AU Peace and Security Council and the LASPeace and Security Council which will take place in Addis Ababa in 2012.

On mobilisation of resources, the two sides recognized the critical importance of joint efforts in support of effective implementation of the activities agreed to in the Sirte Joint Plan of Action. In this respect, the two sides stressed on the urgency of agreeing on concrete proposals on how to operationalize the African-Arab Mechanism to support the peacekeeping and peace building efforts of the two Organizations, as spelt out in paragraph 15 of the Partnership Strategy.

The two sides agreed to meet as required, alternatively in Addis Ababa and in Cairo.