



**Joint Communiqué on the meeting between
Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, and
Sergey Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation**

Addis Ababa, 9 March 2018

At the invitation of H.E. Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, H.E. Mr. Sergey Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, visited the African Union Headquarters on 9 March 2018. Members of the African Union Commission and other Russian officials took part in the meeting.

The Chairperson of the Commission and the Russian Foreign Minister underlined their commitment to further strengthen the partnership between the African Union Commission and the Russian Federation in pursuit of the shared goals of global peace, security, stability and development. In this context, they agreed to convene an annual high-level dialogue to be held alternately in Addis Ababa and Moscow, as well as to review and expand the scope of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation and the African Union Commission on the mechanism of political consultations, signed in Addis Ababa on 17 September 2014.

Chairperson Faki and Minister Lavrov underscored the importance and leading role of multilateral institutions such as the United Nations and the African Union, as instruments to address the multifaceted and interconnected challenges confronting the international community.

Minister Lavrov reaffirmed that the Russian Federation, as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, will continue its constant support of the African Union, its initiatives and peacekeeping efforts aimed at resolving crises and conflict situations in Africa. While welcoming Russia's support to the African Union positions in the Security Council, Chairperson Faki also underlined the need for the United Nations to take the steps required to ensure the sustainable and predictable financing of African-led peace support operations undertaken with the consent of the Security Council. He highlighted the urgency for adequate support for the African Union Mission in Somalia and for the G5 Sahel Joint Force.

The Chairperson of the Commission welcomed Russia's commitment to support, including within the framework of the United Nations Security Council, the efforts being made by the African Union towards achieving the goal of "Silencing the guns in Africa by 2020", based on African leadership and ownership. In this regard, Chairperson Faki and Minister Lavrov exchanged views on various conflict and crisis situations on the continent.

The two sides agreed to intensify cooperation in the fight against terrorism, drug trafficking and organized crime through exchange of experience, information and capacity building between their relevant institutions. The Russian side reiterated its readiness to share with the relevant African Union institutions, notably the African Center on the Study and Research on Terrorism, its list of foreign terrorists so that it could be availed to the African Union Member States, to further assist them in the fight against terrorism. Chairperson Faki welcomed this offer, and it was agreed that the modalities thereof would be worked out between the relevant institutions. Minister Lavrov also conveyed the wish of his country to be granted an observer status with the African Union Mechanism for Police Cooperation (AFRIPOL).

Chairperson Faki and Minister Lavrov identified further priority areas for cooperation between the African Union and the Russian Federation, such as:

- education, science and technology, including the establishment of partnerships between the Pan-African University Institutes and Russian Universities and other academic institutions, scholarship programmes and training of student teachers in science and mathematics, as well as space sciences and programmes and the peaceful applications of nuclear sciences and technology;
- infrastructure, including projects of regional character, energy, agriculture and investments, including through the holding of annual Business Forums.

Chairperson Faki and Minister Lavrov exchanged views on the establishment of formal cooperation between the Eurasian Economic Union and the African Union. Steps will be taken to finalize a Memorandum of Understanding in this respect. Possibilities of cooperation between the African Union and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization will also be explored.

Minister Lavrov expressed Russia's readiness to provide training to African diplomats at its Diplomatic Academy. Chairperson Faki welcomed this offer, the practical details of which would be worked out by the two sides.

The two sides agreed to convene a meeting of experts in the next three months to determine practical activities to be undertaken in the areas of cooperation identified above.

Minister Lavrov expressed appreciation to Chairperson Moussa Faki Mahamat for the warm reception extended to the Russian delegation and invited him to visit the Russian Federation. The Chairperson was pleased to accept the invitation, and a date for the visit will be agreed upon through diplomatic channels.