We need not hand over war to next generations; Pan-African legislators meeting commit to action.

African Union Chairperson of the Peace and Security Council, Amb. Crisantos Obama Ondo, also Permanent Representative of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea to the African Union, has called on the Pan-African Parliament legislators to commit to ending the war on the continent for the continent to achieve the vision of a united, prosperous and integrated continent. In his address during the joint workshop of the Permanent Committees of the Pan-African Parliament in Midrand, South Africa, Amb. Ondo stated that the African Union theme of the year 2020, ‘Silencing the Guns: Creating a Conducive Environment for Development,’ is intended to rally all stakeholders towards prioritising efforts on peace and socio-economic development and addressing the underlying causes of conflict, thereby setting a platform for development to thrive. “We need not hand over the war to the next generation, this can be done by finding the most efficient means to silence the guns, which is implementing specific actions of the Agenda 2063 roadmap and for us to realize Aspiration 4 which seeks a peaceful and secure Africa,” he said.

African leaders in developing the Agenda 2063, identified the rising conflicts on the continent as a major barrier to achieving Africa’s vision of an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa. However, their concerns remain relevant as conflicts persist in the Central African Republic, parts of the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, Libya, South Sudan, as well as parts of the Lake Chad Basin; with violent extremism being witnessed in the Sahel and parts of the Horn and Eastern Africa. In recent times, newer acts of terrorism have taken on a more sophisticated approach.

It is against this backdrop that Africa is on a trajectory of development and is creating a conducive environment through which trade can flourish. Amb. Ondo, underlined the importance of analysing and understanding the key enablers of development while addressing issues that may be detrimental to attaining its goals. “We need to increase our regional efforts and strengthen our international cooperation with key stakeholders if we are to end the war on the continent and the world. We should also ensure that we reduce poverty and climate change to silence guns,” he added.

Parliamentarians have been identified as key in advancing peace and stability in the continent and therefore have a key and critical role to play in promoting the ‘silencing of the guns campaign’ at the grassroots level. Hon. Salem Gnan from Libya appealed to African Institutions not only to silence guns but to also stop circulation of illegal arms around the continent. “Libya does not only need silencing of the guns, but we also need to stop illegal arms reaching our shores. I call upon relevant
African Institutions to get committed and end this machination which is killing our country. This we need to do together as Africans with one voice,” he said.

Hon. Bashar Isah from Nigeria believes that it is the leadership crisis which is to blame in all this chaotic situation. “To get to the bottom of this, Africa needs to frankly look at how we got here and be honest in addressing it. Defective leadership recruitment process has got us this far, it is not normal to keep silent in the face of tyranny; hence we need to be brutally frank in confronting the present situation if we are to prevail,” he said.

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