



HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON THE RELEASE OF THE REPORT OF THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL ON “SPECIAL MEASURES FOR PROTECTION FROM SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE: A NEW APPROACH”

“PREVENTION OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE: BUILDING MOMENTUM FOR CHANGE”

Monday 18th September 2017, Trusteeship Council Chambers

REMARKS BY THE SPECIAL ENVOY OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

On behalf of HE Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, I wish to first and foremost salute and congratulate the Secretary General for the urgency with which you have undertaken to tackle the issue of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse that continue to shatter lives of those we engage to protect and to roll out this new approach that builds on pillars that touch to the core of the scourge, including restoring the dignity of the victims and ending impunity of the perpetrators.

The African Union is fully committed to ensuring that those who engage in its peace support operations are indeed bound and abide by the zero tolerance policy on Sexual exploitation and abuse of the organization. Indeed, the AU has commissioned Independent Investigations Teams when allegations of Sexual exploitation and Abuse have been made, like in the case of AMISOM in 2014, whose conclusions were published on 21 April 2015.

The AU takes this opportunity to thank the United Nations for the enhanced collaboration between the two organizations. On a recent Joint solidarity mission to DR Congo, the UN Deputy Secretary General, The UN Women Executive Director, the Special Representative of the SG on Violence against Women in Conflict , and myself as Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, had an opportunity to review first hand, the implementation of the policies on the ground. Moreover, as recently as two weeks ago, the AU hosted a UN Mission that came to support the Commission in the finalization of its compliance policies in its peace support operations, including the Sexual and Abuse Exploitation Zero tolerance policy.

One area of paramount importance in the responses to SEA is the role of Troop contributing Countries (TCCs) in carrying out their primary responsibility for the requisite prosecutorial action to be undertaken in order to ensure that the victims get justice, assistance and reparation. We salute the countries that are signing today the Voluntary Compact and those that have contributed to Trust Fund for victims.

We wish to take this opportunity, to once more call upon all TCCs and PCCs to substantially increase the number of women in deployed forces, as they have proven that they build trust with communities and hence allow better responses of our peace support operations. I have personally witnessed this first hand in various countries that I have visited in the course of my mandate as Special Envoy on women, Peace and Security, including in Somalia, Central Africa Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, and South Sudan.

We all know that SEA will not disappear all of a sudden because of all the measures that our combined efforts put in place to curtail these inhuman acts. But we also know that our silence and inaction would lead to more suffering of scores of women and girls, whose demand is only the right to peace, as enshrined in Article

10 of the African Union Maputo Protocol. We cannot allow this to be. Let's us all stand with one voice and we shall prevail.

Thank you.