



**STATEMENT**  
**MADE BY HIS EXCELLENCY AMBASSADOR SMAIL CHERGUI,**  
**COMMISSIONER FOR PEACE AND SECURITY**

**TO THE**  
**AFRICAN UNION PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL AND UNITED**  
**NATIONS PEACEBUILDING COMMISSION INTERACTIVE**  
**DIALOGUE ON MONDAY 11 NOVEMBER 2019**

**AFRICAN UNION HEADQUARTERS,**  
**ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**

**Chairperson of the Peace and Security Council for the month of November, H.E. Amb. Rachid Benlounes, Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, H.E. Amb. Guillermo Fernandez de Soto Valderrama, Assistant Secretary General, Mr. Oscar Fernandez-Taranco,**  
**Distinguished Members of the AUPSC,**  
**Members of the Peacebuilding Commission,**

Excellencies, permit me to express sincere gratitude to the Chairperson and members of the African Union Peace and Security Council (PSC), for the opportunity accorded to both the African Union and the United Nations, to reflect and focus on opportunities and progress that concern our strategic partnership which is essential to conflict prevention and sustainable peace on the continent. That said, I wish to convey my deep gratitude to the dedication and tireless efforts of the UN Peacebuilding Commission as stewards of global peace and to commend the work being done in Africa.

The partnership between the AU and the UN is bearing fruit in different African countries, including the Central African Republic, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Madagascar and Mali, and it can only grow in stature and strength. I wish to note here that both organizations have made a commitment to work together towards the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 sustainable development agenda, in recognition of the nexus between peace, security, human rights and development. The increasing collaboration between the Peacebuilding Commission and our Peace and Security Council is commendable. I believe that a successful implementation of post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding on the continent requires the active engagement of both organizations in order to take advantage of existing resources, mechanisms, processes and synergies.

As you may recall, at an Ambassadorial-level informal interactive dialogue held in New York on 18 July 2018 between the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peace and Security Council,

deliberations during the dialogue revolved around the need to institutionalize regular Peacebuilding Commission and PSC interactions by holding annual meetings between the two entities.

As well, an earlier interactive dialogue between the Peacebuilding Commission and the PSC held on 7 December 2017 welcomed the engagement between the Commission and the Peacebuilding Commission which would go a long way to drive the agenda of preventing conflict and sustaining peace on the continent as captured in the Joint United Nations – African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security, signed by the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the Commission on 19 April 2017. This framework has provided a solid foundation for both organizations to have a predictable, systematic and strategic partnership throughout the conflict cycle. This is very necessary given the pressing challenges facing the continent. Accordingly, I welcome today's opportunity to help us reflect and build on our efforts as we approach critical milestones to achieve and advance peace, security and development on the continent.

I am confident that our efforts in sustaining peace have laid a firm and solid foundation to build on achievements realized at a time when the review of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture in 2020 offers an opportunity to take stock of progress achieved and to identify challenges and implementation gaps.

In my view, if we are to concretely consolidate gains made thus far, we will have to continue dedicating due attention to addressing root causes and tackling socio-economic dimensions of conflict, taking into account the voices of affected communities including women and the youth when designing interventions for sustained resilience and livelihood options for communities on the continent.

As a continental organization, our approach in post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding has seen the bolstering of our roles through various mechanisms. At the core of the Commission's Post-conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) is the need to build sustainable resilience with a view to enhancing structural transformation in order to prevent relapse. In this regard, the

Commission continues to deploy efforts to support countries emerging from conflicts or those in challenging transitions.

Through its Inter-departmental Task Force on PCRD, it ensures an effective coordination of strategic policy guidance and implementation in preventing conflict and building resilience of communities affected by conflict. Throughout, we are working more closely with Regional Economic Communities and Mechanisms in the development of strategies and programmes for their regions, the development of key policy instruments as well as strengthening partnership with the United Nations and other stakeholders.

Operationally, our Liaison Offices play a key role in preventing conflict and sustaining peace; in Burundi, CAR, DRC, Gambia, Mali, South Sudan, Madagascar, and soon in Liberia as well.

Additionally, the deployment of gender experts from the FemWise-Africa network to two of our Liaison Offices in October 2019 is a further demonstration of the Commission's intent to promote women's participation in political dialogue, peace and security. Ten of our offices shall have experts deployed by next year.

Our mediation mechanism has grown in stature and the newly operationalized African Union Mediation Support Unit can also play an important role in ensuring that special envoys have the necessary tools, expertise and operational support to backstop their work on mediation in fragile and post-conflict settings.

Excellences, I wish to highlight the Commission's commitment to ensuring women's role in peacebuilding. The Commission's Gender, Peace and Security Programme which aims at developing and implementing effective strategies and mechanisms for women's increased participation in peace and security and enhancing protection in conflict and post-conflict situations, is being implemented in Burundi, the Central African Republic, Mali, Somalia and South Sudan.

On the other hand, the Commission in partnership with the Lake Chad Basin Commission played a crucial role in developing the Lake Chad Basin Regional Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience Strategy, which is a comprehensive and shared regional framework to respond to the multi-layered challenges in the Boko Haram-affected areas of the Lake Chad Basin region.

I should also add that the Commission continues to provide additional support to the Multinational Joint Task Force against Boko Haram using its own resources including equipment and funding for quick impact projects. In the same context, the Commission, in close collaboration with the Lake Chad Basin Commission and MNJTF Troop Contributing Countries, is engaging with partners and the international community to mobilize additional support, to enable the force fulfil its mandate. Once the ECCAS PCRD Strategy is finalized, the document will enhance the region's PCRD and stabilization efforts, and would, more critically, serve as a framework to guide as a coordinated engagement of African and other actors supporting peace consolidation efforts in the region.

On the Regional Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), the Commission, since June 2017, given the continued insecurity, is working collaboratively with relevant actors to develop a regional strategy for the stabilization of LRA-affected areas, based on lessons learned from the development of the Regional Strategy for the Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience of Boko Haram-affected Countries in the Lake Chad Basin.

I also applaud efforts undertaken by the various Organs and the Arab Republic of Egypt for the ongoing efforts to operationalize the African Union Centre for Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development before the end of the year.

Excellencies, while there have been many successes, our work has not been without challenges. As we aim to address key priorities, we must still come to terms with the common challenges that we face in the fast-changing dynamics of conflict on the continent. The complexity of the dynamic security environment on the continent requires sustained engagement that aims to build a culture

of tolerance and peaceful coexistence. The emergence of new threats and challenges such as the growing sophistication of terrorism, cyber and transnational organized crimes, with the increasing impact of climate change, that have caused displacement and inter-community conflicts, needs the adaptation of our joint responses, as no single organization can do it alone. Both organizations have to continue working collaboratively to sustain peace in accordance with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union's Agenda 2063.

To build on our partnership, I wish to make a few observations and recommendations with a view to advance our progress to achieving durable peace on the continent.

**Firstly,** the strategic partnership as elaborated in the aforementioned Memorandum of Understanding gives both organizations an opportunity to strengthen this partnership so that together they can achieve and advance peace, security and development on the continent. However, operationally, the engagement between the Peace and Security Department and the Peacebuilding Support Office has been limited, resulting in minimal operationalization of the Memorandum of Understanding.

To this effect, I extend an invitation to the Peacebuilding Support Office and Peacebuilding Fund to undertake technical working visits to the Commission's headquarters in Addis Ababa to gain a deeper understanding of our working methods and thus gain an improved understanding of the dynamics, limitations, and challenges of the Commission. Anchoring the partnership on the Commission-wide Inter-departmental Task Force on PCRD and other relevant mechanisms would provide a structured space for engagements between the two organizations and help to develop and implement action-oriented post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding initiatives.

**Secondly,** I acknowledge the collective responsibility to prioritize goals set out in such action plans as the Joint UN-AU Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063 and encourage continued efforts towards promoting and sustaining a robust culture of peace and tolerance aimed at preventing crises and relapses.

**Thirdly,** I wish to underscore the need to double our efforts following the adoption of *resolution 2457* (2019) which provides a foundation to rid the continent of conflict through its “*Silencing the Guns* in Africa by the Year 2020” initiative, and to establish a conflict-free region and make peace a reality for all Africans.

Looking ahead, we need to reflect on how we can enhance national ownership of post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding processes while also supporting our Member States’ efforts to improve accountability, inclusivity, sustainability and especially to increase the meaningful participation of women and the youth in post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding. Strengthening our strategic partnership through concrete deliverables for conflict-affected communities has a great impact on collective and community peace. By working together and increasing our investment in conflict prevention and sustaining peace, we can make Africa conflict-free possible.

As I conclude, Excellencies, the Commission stands ready to work with the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Support Office to further develop and enhance the implementation of peacebuilding initiatives on the continent, resulting in a more results-oriented partnership.

I thank you for your kind attention and look forward to continued engagement and interactions.