Central Organ/MEC/AMB/Comm. (L.XXVI)

COMMUNIQUÉ OF THE SEVENTY-SIXTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE CENTRAL ORGAN OF THE OAU MECHANISM FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION, MANAGEMENT AND RESOLUTION HELD AT AMBASSADORIAL LEVEL

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA, 20 SEPTEMBER 2001

The Central Organ of the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution held its 76th Ordinary Session at Ambassadorial level in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on Thursday, 20 September 2001. The Session, which was open-ended, was chaired by H.E. Mr. Simataa Akapelwa, Ambassador of the Republic of Zambia to Ethiopia and Permanent Representative to the OAU. It was also the first meeting of the Central Organ to be attended by the new Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Amara Essy.

The Central Organ considered the Report of the Secretary-General on the preparation of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, scheduled to start in Addis Ababa on 15 October 2001. It was also briefed on the recent developments in the peace process in Sierra Leone and in the relations between the countries of the Mano River Union. The Central Organ was further briefed on the recent terrorist attacks in the United States of America.

On this occasion, the Secretary-General made a statement in which he highlighted the priorities of the General Secretariat in the coming months.

At the end of its deliberations, the Central Organ decided as follows:

a) On the situation in the DRC and the preparation of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue:

The Central Organ:

1. EXPRESSES SATISFACTION at the positive and encouraging outcome of the Preparatory Meeting for the Inter-Congolese Dialogue held in Gaborone, Botswana, from 20 to 25 August 2001, particularly, at the spirit of tolerance and compromise that prevailed during the discussions, and REITERATES the importance of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue for the successful conclusion of the peace process in the DRC;
2. CONGRATULATES the Facilitator, Sir Ketumile Masire, for the sustained efforts he has deployed for the commencement of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue. The Central Organ also COMMENDS the Congolese parties and REQUESTS them to demonstrate a spirit of tolerance and compromise and to cooperate fully with the Facilitator;

3. APPEALS to all Member States and the rest of the international community to fully support the Facilitator, including providing financial assistance;

4. WELCOMES the decision of the Congolese parties to hold the Inter-Congolese Dialogue in Addis Ababa, Headquarters of the OAU/African Union;

5. RECALLS the relevant provisions of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement under which “the Congolese Parties agree that the OAU assist the DRC in the organization of the Inter-Congolese political negotiations, under the aegis of a neutral Facilitator chosen by the Parties by virtue of his moral authority, international credibility and experience”. In that connection, the Central Organ REQUESTS the Secretary-General to give logistical assistance to the Facilitator and to take all the necessary measures to enable the OAU to play fully its role of moral guarantor as stipulated in the relevant provisions of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement;

6. EXPRESSES SATISFACTION at the positive outcome of the 12th meeting of the Political Committee on the implementation of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, held in Kigali, Rwanda, on 14 and 15 September 2001, particularly at the confidence building measures adopted on that occasion. In this regard, the Central Organ TAKES NOTE of the complete withdrawal of the Namibian troops from the DRC and the withdrawal of the major part of the Ugandan Forces and WELCOMES the reaffirmation by all the Parties with forces in the DRC of their readiness to withdraw all their troops, as soon as the UN deploys peacekeepers. The Central Organ also EXPRESSES SATISFACTION at the adoption by the Political Committee of the decision for the co-location of the Joint Military Commission (JMC) with MONUC in Kinshasa;

7. APPEALS to the UN Security Council for the completion, without delay, of the deployment of Phase II of MONUC and for the deployment of phase III, which constitutes an essential element for the implementation of the Disarmament, Disengagement, Reintegration, Repatriation or Relocation of the armed groups (DDRRR), the establishment of the institutions that would emanate from the Inter-Congolese Dialogue and the final withdrawal of all foreign troops from the DRC;
8. **EXPRESSIONS** its appreciation to Ambassador Kamel Morjane, the former Special Representative of the UN Secretary General in the DRC, for carrying out his duties with dedication and professionalism and **WELCOMES** the appointment of the new Special Representative, Mr. Amos Namanga Ngongi, who has since assumed duties in Kinshasa;

9. **PAYS TRIBUTE** to President Frederick Chiluba of Zambia, Chairman of the Regional Peace Initiative on the DRC and to all the other leaders, for their untiring efforts aimed at promoting the implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement in the DRC;

10. **APPEALS** to Member States and the International Community at large to provide humanitarian assistance that is commensurate with the plight of the Congolese civilian populations affected by the conflict in the DRC.

b) **On the Peace Process in Sierra Leone and the relations between the countries of the Mano River Union:**

**The Central Organ:**

1. **WELCOMES** the encouraging developments in the peace process in Sierra Leone, particularly the progress in the implementation of the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Programme (DDR), as well as the efforts to promote peace and reconciliation among the countries of the Mano River Union;

2. **URGES** all parties in Sierra Leone to continue to fulfill their obligations under the peace process and to find ways and means of resolving outstanding differences, including those relating to the conduct of the electoral process;

3. **APPEALS**, once again, to OAU Member States and the international community at large to lend stronger support to the ongoing Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Programme in Sierra Leone, as well as to the post-conflict reconstruction programmes in the context of the efforts to consolidate peace in Sierra Leone;

4. **APPEALS** to the international community to provide UNAMSIL with adequate means to effectively carry out its mandate and **APPEALS** further to Member States and other countries within the international community to provide additional troops to enable UNAMSIL achieve its required troops strength;
5. **WELCOMES** the decision of the Secretary-General to dispatch his Special Envoy to Sierra Leone for consultations and to explore what more the OAU can do to further assist in the search for peace, stability and development in Sierra Leone, particularly in consolidating the implementation of the DDR Programme;

6. **EXPRESSES** satisfaction at the recent steps taken by the leaders of the three countries of the Mano River Union to improve their relations and promote peace and stability in the region, including the consultative meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Mano River Union, held in Monrovia, Liberia, from 13 to 15 August 2001, and **REITERATES** its support for the ongoing efforts to convene a meeting to be attended by the three Presidents of the countries of the Mano River Union;

7. **PAYS TRIBUTE** to President Alpha Oumar Konare, Chairman of ECOWAS, the ECOWAS Mediation Committee of Heads of State, other leaders of the Region, as well as civil society organizations, in particular the Mano River Union Women Peace Network, for their commendable efforts aimed at sustaining the peace process in Sierra Leone and bringing about peace, security, stability in the Mano River region;

8. **REITERATES** the support of the OAU for the deployment of an ECOMOG Force at the border of the three Mano River countries and **APPEALS** to the international community to provide financial support to ECOWAS to enable it deploy and sustain the Force;

9. **APPEALS** to Member States and the international community at large to urgently provide humanitarian assistance to the affected populations in the countries of the Mano River Union.

c) **On the Terrorist Attacks against the USA:**

The Central Organ:

1. **CONDEMNS** unequivocally the horrific terrorist attacks that have caused enormous loss of human life and destruction in New York, Washington DC and Pennsylvania;

2. **EXPRESSES** to the Government and people of the United States of America the full solidarity and the deepest condolences of the OAU and the entire people of Africa over this tragedy which affected not only the people of the USA, but humanity as a whole;
3. **STRESSES** the urgent need to bring to justice the perpetrators and sponsors of these terrorist attacks and **CALLS ON** the international community to work in a more coordinated and determined manner to prevent and combat terrorism;

4. **RECALLS** the adoption of the OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism and **APPEALS** to all Member States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify this instrument.