PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT OF THE STATE OF PEACE AND SECURITY ON THE CONTINENT BY THE COMMISSIONER FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS PEACE AND SECURITY (CPAPS) AMB. BANKOLE ADEOYE TO THE 35TH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE AU ASSEMBLY 6TH FEBRUARY, 2022, ADDIS ABABA

PROTOCOL

Excellency, Macky SALL, President of the Republic of Senegal and Chairperson of the African Union;

Excellencies, Heads of State and Government of the African Union here present;

Excellency, Chairperson of the AU Commission;

Heads of Delegations;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Permit me to also convey my best wishes for the year 2022.

On behalf of the Chairperson of the Commission, I am highly honoured to provide to this Esteemed Assembly, the details of the Report of the State of Peace and Security in Africa. Permit me, at the very outset, on behalf of the Chairperson of the Commission, H.E. Moussa Faki MAHAMAT, to warmly congratulate the Republic of Kenya for assuming the Chair of the Council in this month of February, 2022.

Chairperson of the Union

Excellencies,
2. Africa is now contending with unprecedented, persistent and emerging threats, which impact on the very existence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, political unity and survival of member-states of our dear union. Without a shadow of doubt, the clearly identified multiplication of principal threats to peace, security and stability are: (1) Terrorism, Violent Extremism and Radicalisation; (2) Upsurge of Unconstitutional Changes of Government, evident by the latest attempted coup d’état in Guinea Bissau; and (3) Complex political transitions. Coupled with these threats, is the public health security challenge posed by the COVID-19 pandemic as well as climate induced insecurity.

(1) On Terrorism, Violent Extremism and Radicalisation

3. Excellencies, what I refer to as the globalization of violence expressed in Terrorism and Violent Extremism is upon us on the continent. Regrettably, the threat has now spread to all five (5) regions of our continent. Indeed, countries earlier considered immune to terrorism have been targeted by terrorist elements, occupying both governed and ungoverned spaces. The regional hotspots are the farthest inner parts of the Sahel and the southern Libyan border areas, the tumumbs of the Lake Chad Basin, to the Cabo Delgado province of Northern Mozambique. In fact, the Horn of Africa is a long-standing region battling the effects of terrorism especially Al-Shabaab in Somalia. In this regard, the Commission has stepped up support to peace support operations and coalitions including, the Multinational Joint Task Force (MnJTF) in the Lake Chad, SADC Mission in Mozambique, and AMISOM, towards addressing these security challenges. The Commission is also consulting with ECOWAS and
ECCAS on the deployment of 3000-strong force to the Sahel, in line with this Assembly’s decision.

4. Furthermore, as reflected in the report, the activities of private military contractors, mercenaries and foreign forces in some parts of the continent, featured highly in 2021 and threatened to compound the threat to peace, security and governance on the continent. This indeed calls for robust response. In this regard, I am pleased to inform that the Commission has initiated the revision of the 1977 OAU Convention for the Elimination of Mercenarism in Africa. This process is expected to be finalized in the second quarter of 2022, through validation by experts from Member States. The 35th Assembly may wish to encourage Member States to scale up coordination to combat the threat posed by Non-State Armed Groups.

(2) On Upsurge of Unconstitutional Changes of Government

5. Evidently, the year 2021 witnessed a replication of Unconstitutional Changes of Government, with military takeovers in Guinea, Mali and Sudan in 2021 and Burkina Faso in January 2022. This is of great concern especially given the domino-effect of these developments. The recent attempted coup reported in Guinea Bissau is a case in point. In all four cases of military takeovers, the affected countries have been suspended from the activities of the African Union by the Peace and Security Council. At no time before since the creation of the AU, has there been this high number of countries suspended from the Union in one calendar year.
6. Notwithstanding the structural drivers, the UCGs are linked to many factors including insecurity arising from terrorism and violent extremism. This trend points to a growing contravention of the norms of the AU. A worrying trend indeed. The Assembly cannot be indifferent to the potential repercussions for breaching shared values on democracy and good governance. **Therefore, the assembly is respectfully called upon to condemn in the strongest terms, the wave of unconstitutional changes of government and resurgence of military takeovers.**

**Chairperson**  
**Excellencies**

**(3) On Complex Political Transition**

7. A number of our member-states are undergoing very complex transition processes that are threatening the very foundation of their statehood. In this context, the AUC is committed to support these member-states through the political transition process. Specifically, under the auspices of the AU Support Mechanism, mandated by the AU PSC, the Commission has continually supported the transition in the Republic of Chad. Furthermore, based on multi-dimensional needs assessment conducted by the Commission, the AU is in the process of deploying constitution and rule of law experts to support Gambia and Mali, while election experts were deployed to Somalia and we are ready to do the same in Libya, once a new election timetable is approved.
8. Certainly, a democratic and politically stable Africa is imperative to bring about lasting peace and create the conducive ecosystem for the realization of the aspirations of Agenda 2063. Despite these onerous challenges mentioned above, the Continent remains resilient as we witnessed credible and peaceful elections in over sixteen (16) Member States. The role of the African Union in supporting electoral/political processes was therefore crucial to the overall trend of peace and security on the Continent. For the record, the Commission deployed direct technical support to elections in Somalia and The Gambia as well as mediation and preventive diplomacy missions, to member-states where early warning signs of potential post-election conflict were visible. This brought about a reduction in election-related political violence that once characterized many elections across the Continent.

9. We crave the support of this esteemed Assembly to urge Member States to redouble their efforts in inculcating democratic culture of shared values and principles by demonstrating greater commitment to constitutionalism and the Rule of Law. The Commission further calls on your Assembly to express full support and solidarity with the elected government and people of Guinea Bissau, while emphasising the need to put an end to the cycle of violence in the country.

Chairperson,
Excellencies,
Institutional Priorities in Peace and Security
10. Certainly, the scale of security and governance-related challenges on the continent are a reality. The merger of the Political Affairs and the Peace and Security Departments under the AU Institutional Reform signifies an opportunity to integrate the African Governance Architecture (AGA) and the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), to build a peaceful, secure, more democratic and politically stable Africa. Hence the PAPS Department, has prioritized initiatives towards fostering peace and security on the continent some of which are:

i. **Early Warning and Conflict Prevention**

11. **An Inter-Regional Knowledge Exchange Platform (I-RECKE) has been developed by the Commission to facilitate experience sharing and lessons learned on best practices and opportunities for early warning and conflict prevention.** This platform is expected to re-energize early warning systems, preventive diplomacy, and mediation, as well as to mainstream governance in conflict prevention activities, among others.

ii. **Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD)**

12. The Commission launched the first ever Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) Awareness Week in November 2021, on a continent-wide basis. This initiative was endorsed by the PSC, key outcome of which was a proposal to review the implementation of the 15-year-old PCRD Policy Framework. I am also pleased to inform that the AU Centre for PCRD in Cairo, Egypt was also formally launched in December 2021, to serve as a hub of operational excellence on peacebuilding efforts on the Continent. The Commission has also supported PCRD initiatives in the Comoros, Libya, Guinea Bissau, Cote D’Ivoire, South Sudan, as well as Somalia. We remain
committed to extend this support to other member states, particularly Island states.

13. The Commission therefore urges Member States emerging from conflict to make full use of the potential knowledge resources, as we develop the operational capacity of the Cairo-based AU PCRD Centre to enhance the AU’s peacebuilding efforts on the continent. Let me take this opportunity to highly commend the government of the Arab Republic of Egypt for its support in the full operationalization of the AU Center for PCRD.

iii. The Operationalization of Africa Standby Force

14. The recent upsurge in Unconstitutional Changes of Government stems the need to fully operationalize the ASF. In this regard, the AUC is mobilizing the RECs towards finalizing the framework on the deployment of the ASF. This Assembly may wish to commend Member States and RECs/RMs for progress in the operationalization of the ASF, and urge them to expedite the Full Operationalization of the Continental Logistics Base and Regional Depots. Furthermore, the Commission is committed to finalizing the consideration of all aspects related to the establishment of a special unit within the ASF, for combating terrorism, in line with the Assembly decision.

iv. Mediation & Dialogue Initiatives

15. The Commission provided direct technical, financial and political support to Member States as part of broader efforts to foster cooperation, enhance peace and stability, and constructively resolve intra and inter-state conflict. The AU’s foot prints are in Chad, Ethiopia and Sudan where we have
continued to deploy resources in support of mediation and dialogue processes.

Excellencies

16. In line with Article 11 of the PSC Protocol on appointment of the Panel of the Wise (PoW), the Commission has submitted to the Chairperson of the Commission the nominations for the new members of the 5th AU Panel of the Wise for consideration, consultation with the concerned Member States and subsequent submission to this Assembly for endorsement. Relatedly, efforts are on to capacitate and engage women and youth mediation actors, with regular training on thematic issues and numerous short and long-term deployment opportunities for FemWise-Africa members.

17. To consolidate the role of youth in conflict prevention, the Commission has initiated the process of establishing "WiseYouth", to leverage the gains made through the Youth4Peace and other related programmes of the Union. In this regard, this Assembly may wish to endorse and appoint the nominations for the new members of the 5th Panel of the Wise to serve for a three-year term; and endorse the establishment of WiseYouth.

v. Implementation of the AU MASTER ROADMAP on SILENCING THE GUNS by 2030

18. In line with relevant Assembly Decisions, to put in place an institutional mechanism to measure the progress made in implementing the AU Master
Roadmap on Silencing the Guns, the PSC has adopted a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Mechanism, which spells out modalities, actions, stakeholders, and reporting timeframes to trace the implementation of all five (5) aspects of the Roadmap (political, economic, social, environmental and legal). The M&E Mechanism further assigns key responsibilities to the various stakeholders to periodically report on their actions and efforts to implement the Roadmap. Furthermore, the Commission reinforced the Silencing the Guns agenda with a High-Level Seminar on the theme Art, Culture and Heritage as levers to Silencing the Guns in December in 2021.

**Excellencies**

19. I am pleased to inform that the Commission in 2021 worked towards the full operationalisation of the Revitalized AU Peace Fund to fulfil the Union’s commitment to self-financing to address urgent peace and security challenges on the Continent. This pilot utilization is geared towards supporting priority areas or situations, including supporting peace processes in Libya, Mali, Somalia, Sudan, Guinea, among others. In this regard, we wish to commend the Peace and Security Council and as well as the Board of Trustees (BoT) of the Fund, for the support throughout this process of operationalization.

**Excellencies**

vi. **Inclusive, Smart and Mutually Beneficial Partnership**

20. **Excellencies**, the concept of peacekeeping and protection of civilian of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is not as relevant to the needs of Africa given the emerging security threats and challenges. Concerted
action is therefore required from the international community in support of Africa’s efforts to defeat the scourge of terrorism and violent extremism. It is in this regard that the Commission is promoting the concept of peace enforcement. It is therefore imperative to call on the United Nations to support the initiative of the Commission towards Peace enforcement on the continent including in Cabo Delgado, AMISOM, Lake Chad.

**Conclusions: Impact, Challenges and Outlook, ahead of 2022**

**Chairperson,**

**Excellencies,**

21. In conclusion, Africa leaders should collectively champion peace and security landscape in 2022 by renewing commitment to tackle protruding threats of **Terrorism and Violent Extremism, Unconstitutional Changes of Government** and **Complex Political Transitions**, especially in terms of the threat profile. There is an urgent need for more robust, contextually relevant responses in 2022. As a matter of necessity, the African Union should aim at addressing structural drivers of both Terrorism and Unconstitutional Change of Government. Having more robust engagement on the ground, building relationships with key political stakeholders, and visibly popularizing the AU and the mechanisms of the Peace and Security Council, as available to support conflict prevention and resolution are critical elements of the African Peace and Security Architecture and African Governance Architecture (APSA/AGA). Early warning also implies early action. This must be the concrete entry points for the follow up actions to prevent conflict, manage and resolve them.
22. Though the outlook for Africa's governance, peace, and security landscape may appear challenging, however the commitment and strategic vision and guidance of the Assembly, inspires the commission. As the Commission, the PSC and relevant Organs will help deliver the lofty ambitions envisaged in Aspiration 3 and 4 of Agenda 2063 – the Africa we want. We cannot relent as we are encouraged by the words of the great Pan-Africanist, Nelson MANDELLA, "it always seems impossible until its done".

23. It is therefore fundamental that the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, continues champion the promotion of effective governance, peace, security and stability in 2022 and sustainably in the years ahead. **The theme of the Union for this year 2022, gives us another opportunity to secure greater political commitment and investment in human capital, social and economic development towards durable human security.**

Excellencies,

I Thank you.