

AFRICAN UNION

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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL

24 MAY 2019

ADDIS ABABA

INAUGURAL MEETING (I) PSC/REC/RMS

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

**1ST JOINT CONSULTATIVE MEETING BETWEEN THE PEACE AND SECURITY
COUNCIL OF THE AFRICAN UNION AND THE REGIONAL ECONOMIC
COMMUNITIES/REGIONAL MECHANISMS FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION, MANAGEMENT AND
RESOLUTION (RECS/RMS)**

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

1. The Peace and Security Councils (PSC) of the African Union (AU) and the Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (RECs/RMs) convened their 1st Joint Consultative Meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 24 May 2019. The meeting was held in pursuance of relevant provisions of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union as adopted in 2002 and within the framework of the continued implementation of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), as well as the African Governance Architecture (AGA).

2. The Consultative Meeting provided the first ever opportunity for the PSC and the RECs/RMs Policy Organs to reflect on issues relating to the harmonization/division of labour on their decision-making processes, enhancement of coordination and strengthening of synergy in the implementation of the APSA and AGA at both the regional and continental levels.

3. H.E. Ambassador Hope Tumukunde Gasatura, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Rwanda to the AU and Chairperson of the PSC for May 2019, and the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, Ambassador Smail Chergui, made opening statements to the meeting.

4. The representatives of the RECs/RMs and the Policy Organs of the RECs/RMs, namely the East African Community (EAC), East African Standby Force (EASF), Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Inter-Governmental Authority for Development (IGAD), North African Regional Capability (NARC), Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), Arab Maghreb Union (UMA), G5-Sahel, Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC), made presentations on the efforts being deployed by the RECs/RMs towards promoting peace, security and stability in Africa. The presentations highlighted important issues and aspects that require concrete arrangements to facilitate harmonization of decision-making processes and enhancing coordination in the area of peace and security in Africa.

5. Participants deliberated on practical proposals for further strengthening enhancing cooperation and collaboration focusing on an effective and efficient division of labour based on the principles of subsidiarity, complementarity and comparative advantages within the framework of the APSA and AGA.

Acting under relevant provisions of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the AU, the participants:

6. **Express deep concern** over the fact that while the AU and the RECs/RMs continue to deploy efforts towards finding durable solutions to the existing crises and conflicts in different parts of the Continent, new threats are emerging, with some of them mutually reinforcing each other, such as terrorism, trans-national organized crime and drug trafficking;

7. **Express appreciation** that the PSC, over the recent years, has taken concrete steps to address the gaps and challenges impeding full-scale application of the APSA and AGA. Among these steps are the various retreats organized by the PSC with a view to improving ways of enhancing the harmony in decision-making, strengthening coordination, reinforcing synergy and promoting unity of action between PSC and the RECs/RMs Policy Organs;
8. **Commend** the RECs/RMs on the role they continue to play in pursuit of their respective mandates within their regions. Further **commend** those RECs/RMs which have established policy organs and supporting structures to deal with peace and security issues and encourages other RECs/RMs which have not yet to do so, to do the same;
9. **Underscore** that the RECs/RMs are the first responders to the crisis/conflict situations which arise in their geographic areas of mandate and **stress** that the African Standby Force should be deployed/employed within a partnership between the PSC and the RECs/RMs policy organs;
10. **Emphasize** the imperative of the PSC to continue and enhance its provision of political guidance and strategic coordination of actions of the APSA actors/stakeholders and promote inclusive and transparent approach, in order to facilitate effective and efficient synergies in the promotion of peace, security and stability in Africa;
11. **Underscore** the need for redoubled efforts to effectively mobilize adequate funding from within the Continent for peace and security efforts, with a view to reducing dependency on external sources of funding, as well as to facilitate effective implementation of African solutions to peace and security challenges facing the Continent. The participants **agree** to work out joint modalities to address the issue of sustainable funding of peace support operations in Africa, in order to ensure and promote rapidity, efficiency and effectiveness of peace support operations;
12. **Express** appreciation to the AU partners for their continued support to the AU peace efforts and **encourage** them to continue these efforts within the spirit of partnership which enhances African leadership and ownership;
13. **Express deep concern** over increasing external interferences on Africa's peace and security landscape, which poses the risk of undermining African efforts and initiatives, with the consequences of delaying the resolution of crises and conflicts in the Continent, causing severe consequences on African people;
14. **Underscore** the importance of prior consultations and coordination, particularly, during the planning and deployment phases of peace support operations.
15. **Further underscore** the importance of scaling up conflict prevention efforts at both the regional and continental levels, in particular by focusing on engagement with the member states concerned and its REC/RM in order to create opportunities for preventing looming crisis or speedily resolving a blown out conflict;

16. **Agree** to establish a team of focal points from all RECs/RMs and the PSC Secretariat, on peace and security issues which will facilitate a well-coordinated network for regular meetings/consultations, particularly on issues in the agenda of the PSC and also in the agenda of the RECs/RMs;

17. **Emphasize** the need for the RECs/RMs to foster and enhance horizontal coordination and experience;

18. **Also agree** to institutionalize their relationship, in particular through the following:

- i. holding of annual joint consultative meetings, between the PSC and the RECs/RMs policy organs on peace and security issues, alternately in Addis Ababa and in the headquarters of the RECs/RMs, in rotation. In this context, the joint consultative meeting should be convened ahead of the mid-year coordination summit between the AU and RECs/RMs;
- ii. swiftly communicate decisions on peace and security issues to each other for enhancing subsidiarity and complementarity, while ensuring coherence in decision-making process;
- iii. regular interaction between the PSC and the RECs/RMs Chairpersons of the policy organs and/or equivalent relevant structures on peace and security matters, on issues of common concern, including through the use of the video-teleconferencing;
- iv. joint field missions to assess situations of common concern and identify further joint action as may be needed;
- v. holding of joint retreats/brainstorming sessions to reflect on priorities on peace and security issues of the PSC and the RECs/RMs and develop appropriate common response strategies; and
- vi. organizing staff exchange visits.

19. **Further agree** that the RECs/RMs are to forward to the PSC, through the AU Commission-Peace and Security Department, proposals for a practical way forward to be integrated into a single document on the aspects below for consideration by the inaugural mid-year coordination summit of the AU and the RECs/RMs, to take place in Niamey, Niger, in July 2019:

- i. harmonization/division of labour in the area of peace and security;
- ii. modalities for undertaking early responses to looming crisis and expediting action to resolve/mitigate blown out crises/conflicts;
- iii. decision-making on employment/deployment of ASF Standby Forces;

20. **Agree** to convene their future consultative meetings in May each year and, in this regard, **agree** to hold the next joint consultative meeting in May 2020.