



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **AU concludes 10<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Meeting of the Specialised Technical Committee on Defence, Safety and Security (STCDSS)**

**Addis Ababa, 10 January 2018:** The African Union (AU) Specialized Technical Committee on Defence, Safety and Security (STCDSS), concluded its 10<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Meeting, on 9 January 2018, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The meeting reviewed progress made in the implementation of the directives of previous meetings of the STCDSS, particularly the 9<sup>th</sup> ordinary meeting of the STCDSS held on 4 June 2016, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The 10<sup>th</sup> ordinary meeting of the STCDSS was preceded by the 13<sup>th</sup> ordinary meeting of African Chiefs of Defence Staff and Heads of Safety and Security (ACDSS) held on 8 January 2018, and the meeting of STCDSS Experts, held from 5 to 6 January 2018, also in Addis Ababa. The meeting brought together participants from military, police, and civilian institutions with defence, safety, and security mandates from AU Member States and the Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs).

The meeting confirmed progress made so far in the development of the African Standby Force (ASF) and appreciated the efforts of the Independent Panel of Experts led by Professor Ibrahim Gambari for the accomplishment of the Verification, Confirmation and Validation of ASF pledged capabilities. The operationalization, including the inauguration, on 5 January 2018, in Douala, Cameroon, of the ASF Continental Logistic Base (CLB) was also recognized as a major milestone in the development of the ASF. In this regard, the commitment of the Government of the Republic of Cameroon was applauded as an important contribution to the cause of peace and security in Africa. Ministers requested all stakeholders to support the realisation of the full operationalisation of the ASF, and harmonise the activities of ACIRC and all ad-hoc coalitions namely, MNJTF, Group of Five Sahel Joint Force and RCI-LRA Task Force with the ASF Framework.

The meeting paid tribute to African Peacekeepers and victims of violence in Africa and urged AU Member States to continue providing all necessary support to AU Peace Support Operations (PSOs). Specifically, the meeting emphasized the need for harmonisation of all efforts of AU Member States to create the requisite conditions for the realization of the AU's noble objective to build a conflict-free Africa, one in which guns become fully silent.

In his closing remarks, Dr. Mohamed Diane, Minister of Defence of the Republic of Guinea, who chaired the meeting, expressed gratitude to all participants for their contributions and their spirit of hard work and commitment to the promotion of

lasting peace in Africa. Further, Ambassador Smail Chergui, the Commissioner for AU Peace and Security, urged Member States to make their timely contributions to the AU Peace Fund and noted that *“Sustainable and predictable funding mechanisms by Member States must be appropriately resourced for Africa to solve its peace and security challenges with the necessary autonomy in line with our principle of African Solutions to African problems”*.

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