BRIEFING BY AMBASSADOR SMAIL CHERGUI,

COMMISSIONER FOR PEACE AND SECURITY,

AFRICAN UNION

AT THE MEETING OF THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL ON THE COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND REGIONAL AND SUBREGIONAL ORGANISATIONS (AFRICAN UNION)

NEW YORK, 18 JULY 2018
Your Excellency Ms. Annika Söder, Deputy Foreign Minister of Sweden and President of the UN Security Council, 

Distinguished Members of the Security Council, 

Excellencies, distinguished participants, 

Allow me, first of all, to warmly congratulate Sweden on assuming the Presidency of the Security Council for this month of July 2018. I commend your initiative for convening this timely and very important meeting on the Cooperation between the UN and regional and subregional organizations (African Union), which takes place at the eve of the 12th Annual Consultations between the AU Peace and Security Council and the UN Security Council. 

I am also pleased to note that today’s meeting is being held only few days after the very successful AU-UN second Annual Conference held in Addis-Ababa on 9 July. 

It is therefore my distinct honor to address this meeting to highlight the significant progress that has been made in the partnership between our two organizations and the coherence in our decision-making, while enriching each other with the knowledge of our respective comparative advantages. 

Madame President, 
Distinguished Members of the Security Council, 

Over the years, the African Union (AU) has forged a critical partnership with the United Nations in order to achieve its vision of a peaceful, prosperous and integrated continent. This relationship was given a new impetus by the signing in April 2017, of the Joint AU-UN Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security by the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and the Chairperson of the AU Commission Moussa Faki Mahamat. This renewed commitment has indeed moved the partnership from an ad-hoc approach into a more structured and predictable one. 

The second AU-UN annual conference that took place recently in Addis Ababa on 9 July 2018 has reaffirmed the importance of our partnership and the significance of multilateral responses to global security challenges. In this regard, we have committed to enhance
collaboration, cooperation and coordination between our two organizations, based on the principles of complementarity, comparative advantage, burden sharing and collective responsibility.

We have also agreed to enhance consultations prior to decision-making in order to reach shared understanding of the issues at hand and attain consistency in the support of African-led peace efforts.

As the Council noted it already, the ever growing partnership with colleagues of the UN Secretariat takes also an operational additional tool with joint visits on the ground that M. Lacroix and myself started in Darfur and CAR.

It is essential that the positive momentum currently prevailing between our respective secretariats continue to foster dynamism in cooperation and coordination between the UN Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council.

In the field, the partnership between our two decision-making bodies is manifest in our collaborative peace-making efforts in several conflict and post-conflict situations, including in the Central African Republic (CAR), the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Great Lakes region, Guinea Bissau, Mali and Sahel, South Sudan, and Somalia, just to name but a few.

Madame President,
Distinguished Members of the Security Council,

Despite the progress achieved so far, we still face some challenges, particularly when it comes to the relationship between the AU PSC and UNSC where more work is needed in order to achieve greater coherence and coordination when dealing with crisis situations on the Continent.

These include building on the recent gains in South Sudan to impress upon the parties to uphold and implement the signed agreements.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, attention must be geared towards addressing the challenges ahead of the general elections scheduled for 23 December 2018 in line with the Agreement of Saint Sylvester of December 2016.

In Somalia, resource mobilization to enable AMISOM to deliver on its mandate including the gradual handover to the Somali security forces through the Somali Transition Plan and
capacity building remain a critical challenge. If not addressed, the gains made in Somalia might be reversed.

The deteriorating security situation in the Central African Republic is a continuing source of concern. The African Union is grateful to the Security Council for recognizing the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation as the main framework for a political solution in the country.

The situation across the Sahel region also requires our urgent attention. The instability in Northern Mali has not only spilled over to the central region of the country, and to the neighboring Burkina Faso and Niger; it has also morphed into generated inter-community clashes spurred by the conflict between herders and farmers. Critical support from the United Nations is, therefore, required to hasten the operationalization of the G5 Sahel Joint Force. On its part, the AU is finalizing the revision of its Strategy for the Sahel in line with the decision adopted by the PSC at its recent meeting on the margins of the AU Summit in Nouakchott, Mauritania. And I am grateful to my sister Amina Mohammed, Deputy Secretary General, for her determination to coordinate with the AU in order to harmonize our action in the Sahel and avoid duplication in order to deliver effectively and sustainably.

Madame President,
Distinguished Members of the Security Council,

Allow me to recall that the AU has consistently argued for predictable and sustainable financing through UN assessed contributions for AU-led peace operations. In 2015, the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government decided to finance 25% of the cost of AU’s peace support operations. In order to deliver on this objective, in 2016, the AU Assembly decided to endow the AU Peace Fund with $400 million USD. The full endowment level will be reached in 2021 and will be achieved incrementally through the following annual targets: $65m in 2017, $65m in 2018 and $90m in 2019, 2020 and 2021.

As I address this distinguished Council, AU Member States have already contributed 47 million USD, out of the targeted 65 million. This illustrates that, despite their limited resources, AU Member States are committed to assume their share of responsibility to enhance peace and security on the Continent. We hope this will serve as an impetus for the UNSC to move forward in its considerations to avail assessed contributions to AU-led peace support operations.

It is our hope that today’s meeting will pave the way to achieve this objective in line with the pertinent provisions of the UN Charter, including Chapter VIII. Flexibility and
innovation should guide our discussions to ensure coherence among various layers of our global security architecture. In this regard, I am pleased to note that there has been progress, with the new initiative of the Secretary General known as the ‘Action for Peacekeeping (A4P)’.

Madame President,
Distinguished Members of the Security Council,

I wish to conclude by stressing, again, the strategic importance of the AU-UN partnership, particularly its positive impact on peace and security in Africa. Our joint efforts are already bearing fruits and we look forward to building a closer relationship that will deliver on our aspirations for peace and security on the Continent, including silencing the guns by 2020.

Allow me here to commend the bold rapprochement between Ethiopia and Eritrea as an important contribution to silencing the guns. May their wisdom inspire.

I thank you for your kind attention.