CONCLUSIONS

Within the framework of the Partnership on Peace and Security of the Africa/EU Joint Strategy and its Plan of Action, the Chief Executives and other representatives of the AU and the RECs/RMs (CEN-SAD, COMESA, EAC, ECCAS, ECOWAS, IGAD, SADC, EASBRICOM and NARC) held a consultative meeting with senior officials of the EU in Akosombo, Ghana, on 10 and 11 December 2009, in the margins of their annual meeting under the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Cooperation in the area of Peace and Security. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the operationalization of the APSA and EU support to this end.

The meeting commended the progress made by the AU and RECs/RMs in developing APSA structures and policies at the continental and regional levels and underscored the need to continuously develop them in full coherence between the continental and regional components, in line with the PSC Protocol and other relevant instruments.

The meeting welcomed the increased resources made available under the 10th European Development Fund (EDF) to support APSA, notably the Africa Peace Facility (APF), the Regional Indicative Programmes (RIPs) and the Instrument for Stability (IfS), and the fact that all the Regional Strategies and Indicative Programs include a substantial political/peace and security component as a priority sector.

Recognizing that the EU support is provided as part of the Africa-EU Partnership on Peace and Security and is to be coordinated closely with EU Member States and other international partners, the meeting stressed the need for this support to be delivered under one comprehensive framework embodied in a roadmap, mirroring AU and RECs/RMs strategic objectives and adapted to different stages of progress. The European Commission (EC) pledged to redouble its efforts in cooperation with other partners in order to facilitate the coordination and management of support programmes.

The meeting emphasized that the operationalization of APSA will remain a crucial part of the Africa-EU Partnership on Peace and Security, and re-stated the need to further strengthen the involvement of the RECs/RMs in the process under the overall leadership of the AU.

The meeting agreed on the following two lines of action:

First, the meeting recognized the need to ensure continuity of ongoing support under the capacity building component of the APF and to build on the work already undertaken, by agreeing on a first set of measures to avoid gaps between present and future EC support programmes. In line with the MoU, this first set of support will include:

a) the implementation of the MoU between the AU and the RECs/RMs in the area of Peace and Security, including supporting the Liaison Offices of the RECs/RMs to the AU and establishing AU Liaison Offices to the RECs/RMs;
b) the strengthening of capacities in the area of mediation;

c) the further development of the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) at the AU and RECs levels;

d) the full operationalization of the African Standby Force (ASF), in particular through support to strategic planning, deployment and management capacities of the ASF, training, in particular further development of ASF-related concepts, including rapid deployment capability. As part of this process, a joint workshop will be convened in January 2010 to identify the way forward for future EU support regarding African training capabilities;

e) administrative and financial support; and

f) the further development of policies and strategies in the areas of counter terrorism, Security Sector Reform, disarmament and non-proliferation, post-conflict reconstruction and development, maritime security, as well as the AU Border Program (AUBP).

The meeting agreed that a consolidated first set of priority areas for APF support and other EC relevant instruments would be completed by February 2010 and be submitted to the next APF Joint Coordination Committee, which will take place immediately after the next AU Summit in January/February 2010. In addition, as and when the need arises, EU support will continue to be provided for African-led peace support operations and stabilization missions, in accordance with the provisions governing the functioning of the APF.

The meeting also reviewed the challenges faced in the implementation of the current capacity building programme. The EC, the AUC and the RECs/RMs undertook to look into the challenges encountered with a view of facilitating the smooth flow of funds.

Second, and in parallel, the AU and the RECs/RMs will conduct, from March to May 2010, an assessment of progress achieved in the operationalization of APSA and the challenges ahead, with a view to identifying further priorities and capacity needs. This will be achieved through a specific study, which will build upon existing mappings and reports, including the outcomes of the Regional Seminars with the RECs organized by the EC. On that basis, the AU-RECs/RMs will engage with the EU to reach an agreement by July 2010 on the support to be rendered in the medium and long term.

Finally, the meeting concluded that the priorities as identified by the AU-RECs/RMs will be consolidated into a roadmap which will serve as a reference framework for support to APSA under relevant EC sources of funding and will be brought to the Joint Expert Group of the Partnership on Peace and Security, in order to achieve alignment of EU Member States’ support to the framework and contribute to the enhancement of the Africa-EU partnership. This process and its deliverables are intended to be a contribution to the Year of Peace and Security in Africa in 2010 and to the next Africa/EU Summit.

Akosombo, 11 December 2009