2nd MEETING OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVES OF THE AU AND THE REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITIES (RECS)/REGIONAL MECHANISMS FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION, MANAGEMENT AND RESOLUTION (RMS)
10 AND 11 DECEMBER 2009
AKOSOMBO, GHANA

DECLARATION
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1. As part of the implementation of Article 16 of the Protocol relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) and the relevant provisions of the January 2008 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Cooperation in the area of Peace and Security, the 2nd meeting of the Chief Executives of the AU and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs)/Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (RMs) took place in Akosombo, Ghana, on 10 and 11 December 2009. The meeting was hosted by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

2. In addition to the Chairperson of the AU Commission, Mr. Jean Ping, and the President of the ECOWAS Commission, Dr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas, who co-chaired the meeting, the following were in attendance: the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security; the Secretary General of the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD); the Executive Secretary of the North Africa Regional Capability (NARC); the Deputy Secretaries General/Executive Secretaries of the East African Community (EAC) and the Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA); the Director of the Coordinating Mechanism of the Regional Standby Brigade of East Africa (EASBRICOM); and representatives of the Secretaries-General/Executive Secretaries of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD).

3. The meeting considered the status of implementation of the MoU on Cooperation in the area of Peace and Security, the operationalization of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), cooperation in the promotion of peace and security in Africa, and other related issues.

I. On the Status of Implementation of the MoU on Peace and Security:

4. The meeting welcomed the progress made so far in the implementation of the MoU, in particular the increased cooperation between the AU and the RECs/RMs in the promotion of peace and security, as demonstrated by the steps jointly taken towards the operationalization of the APSA, the implementation of the AU Border Programme, the elaboration of a continental strategy on small arms and light weapons, as well as the cooperative efforts in the prevention and resolution of conflicts. The meeting also welcomed the establishment of RECs Liaison Offices to the AU and noted with satisfaction the posting of Liaison Officers to the AU by six RECs. The meeting further welcomed NARC’s undertaking to sign the MoU.

5. The meeting emphasized the need to intensify efforts to deepen cooperation in all areas covered by the MoU, including enhancing cooperation and coordination in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, as well as post-conflict reconstruction and peace building. The meeting urged the RECs/RMs that have not yet done so to speedily establish Liaison Offices with the AU, and welcomed the steps being taken by the AU Commission to hasten the establishment of its Liaison Offices to the RECs/RMs. The meeting also stressed the need to fully implement the provisions of the MoU with respect to the exchange of information, in particular the submission of regular reports by the AU and the RECs/RMs on
their activities in the area of peace and security and the consultations at desk-to-desk level, including the exchange of names of focal points.

II. **On the status of operationalization of the African Peace and Security Architecture:**

6. The meeting received an update on the development of APSA. Regarding the operationalization of the African Standby Force (ASF), the meeting having welcomed the progress made at continental and regional levels, including the ability to deploy by EASBRICOM, stressed the need for all concerned to take the necessary steps to implement the outstanding aspects of the ASF and ensure the successful conduct of the exercise Amani Africa, due to take place in 2010.

7. On the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS), the meeting noted with satisfaction the progress made in its development and the close cooperation that exists between the AU and the RECs/RMs on early warning, including the convening of quarterly meetings to ensure effective coordination and collaboration. The meeting called for the intensification of these efforts, in particular the connectivity between the CEWS and the Early warning systems of the RECs, and the enhancement of the analytical capacity at continental and regional levels.

8. On the Panel of the Wise, the meeting noted with satisfaction the positive work undertaken by the AU Panel of the Wise to strengthen AU’s efforts on conflict prevention, management and resolution.

III. **On the funding of Africa-led peace support operations:**

9. The meeting stressed the need to intensify efforts towards a lasting solution to the funding of Africa-led peace support operations. It noted the initiatives being taken at regional and international levels in this respect. It agreed that the RECs/RMs and the AU would work together to finalize the report on the funding of Africa-led peace support operations to be submitted to the AU Assembly in June 2010 as a follow-up to the Tripoli Declaration of 31 August 2009.

IV. **On the peace and security situation in Africa:**

10. The meeting noted the significant progress made in the resolution of conflicts and the consolidation of democratic processes in the continent. At the same time, it acknowledged the very serious challenges that Africa continues to face in the area of peace and security, with the resulting humanitarian, socio-economic and political consequences.

11. In this respect, the meeting called for renewed commitment towards conflict prevention, management and resolution, as well as post-conflict reconstruction and peace building. In particular, it stressed the need for the AU and the RECs/RMs to enhance their cooperation and coordination, including contribution of forces to African-led peace support operations, in line with the relevant provisions of the PSC Protocol and the MoU on cooperation in the area of Peace and Security and on the basis of the Plan of Action adopted by the AU Special Session held in Tripoli, Libya, on 31 August 2009, as well as other relevant decisions of the AU PSC and similar organs in the RECs/RMs and instruments adopted at regional and continental levels.
V. On Unconstitutional Changes of Government in Africa and election-related conflicts and violence:

12. The meeting expressed deep concern over the resurgence of coups d’Etat and other forms of unconstitutional changes of Government in the continent, including the manipulation of constitutions and electoral laws, in violation of constitutional provisions, recalling in this respect the relevant paragraphs of the Tripoli Declaration.

13. The meeting welcomed the ongoing measures to enhance Africa’s capacity to address the scourge of unconstitutional changes of Government, as a follow-up to the decision adopted by the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government in February 2009 and building on existing instruments at regional and continental levels. Such efforts will aim at enhancing the effectiveness of responses to unconstitutional changes of Government; the prevention of their occurrence; and closer coordination and harmonization at regional and international levels, to ensure strict compliance with sanctions taken at the continental level. The meeting urged the RECs/RMs to speed up their inputs to the report and recommendations to be submitted to the next Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union, scheduled to be held in Addis Ababa in January/February 2010.

14. In the meantime, the meeting agreed that the AU and the RECs shall initiate joint efforts to facilitate the ratification of the January 2007 African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, noting that the speedy entry into force and effective implementation of this instrument will go a long way in helping Africa address the scourge of unconstitutional changes of Government.

15. The meeting also exchanged views on election-related conflicts and violence. It welcomed the endorsement of the report of the Panel of the Wise on this subject by the AU Summit in July 2009, in Sirte. The AU and the RECs resolved to undertake joint activities to follow-up on the recommendations of the report, including the organization of sensitization workshops in the course of 2010.

VI. On the Year of Peace and Security in Africa:

16. The meeting underlined the need for the AU and the RECs/RMs to closely work together to implement activities to mark 2010 as the Year of Peace and Security in Africa, in line with the Tripoli Declaration of 31 August 2009. To this end, the meeting welcomed the plans by ECOWAS to organize an international Conference on Two Decades of Peace Processes in West Africa, in March 2010, and other initiatives planned by other RECs/RMs.

VII. On the EU support to the operationalization of the African Peace and Security Architecture:

17. The meeting exchanged views with the European Union (EU) on the EU’ support to the operationalization of APSA, in line with the Partnership on Peace and Security of the December 2007 Lisbon Joint Strategy and Plan of Action. The meeting also reviewed the challenges faced in the implementation of the current capacity building programme. The EC and the AUC committed to look into the challenges encountered with a view of facilitating
the smooth flow of funds. It welcomed the conclusions reached at the end of this interaction.

VIII. Follow-up and implementation:

18. The meeting requested the AU Commission, in cooperation with the RECs/RMs, to develop a detailed programme identifying the activities to be undertaken throughout 2010, to facilitate the follow-up and implementation of the MoU. It was further agreed that this programme would be reviewed on a quarterly basis.

IX. Appreciation:

19. The meeting expressed its profound gratitude to the ECOWAS Commission and to its President for hosting the meeting. The meeting also expressed appreciation to the Government of Ghana for its hospitality and support.

X. Next Meeting of the AU, RECs/RMs Chief Executives:

20. The meeting welcomed the offer by the EAC to host the next meeting of AU, RECs/RMs Chief Executives at a venue and date to be agreed upon in consultation with the AU Commission.

Akosombo, 11 December 2009