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## JOINT PRESS RELEASE

### THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION AND THE EUROPEAN UNION HOLD THE 9<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE AFRICA PEACE FACILITY (APF) JOINT COORDINATION COMMITTEE

**Addis Ababa, 3 June 2014:** A two-day meeting of the Joint Coordination Committee (JCC) of the African Peace Facility (APF) started today at the African Union (AU) Headquarters in Addis Ababa. The meeting brings together representatives of the AU Commission, the European Union (EU) and the following Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (RECs/RMs): the Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA), the Community of Sahelo-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), the East African Community (EAC), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the North Africa Regional Capability (NARC) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

The JCC meeting was opened by the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, Ambassador Smail Chergui, and the European External Action Service Managing Director for Africa, Nick Westcott. In his statement, Commissioner Chergui expressed AU's appreciation to the EU for its unwavering support to peace and security efforts in Africa. "We acknowledge the EU's continued support through the APF to our mission in Somalia (AMISOM), the African-led International Support Mission to the Central Africa Republic (MISCA), as well as support to our efforts against the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)," he said.

On his part, Director Westcott said this meeting gives the opportunity to design programmes and plan their implementation. He noted that the EU had committed 750 million Euros for the APF under the new Three-Year Action Programme (2014 – 2016) to contribute towards the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in Africa. We do so, he said, because "the APF had proved its relevance, efficiency and impact to tackle peace and security issues around the continent."

The JCC meeting will provide an opportunity to look at the achievements and challenges encountered by the APF stakeholders based on the evaluation that was conducted and finalized in 2013. In this respect, the meeting will consider operations currently benefiting from the APF support (AMISOM and MISCA mainly), as well as the support programme for the operationalization of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), a blueprint for the promotion of peace, security and stability in Africa. The JCC meeting will also discuss the APF perspective for 2014 and beyond, with a view to finalizing a three-year work programme, which is expected to contribute to the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in Africa through support to the operationalization of APSA, financing of African-led peace support operations and enhanced political dialogue between the AU and the EU.

## **NOTE TO THE EDITORS**

***About the African Peace Facility and the Joint Coordination Committee:*** The Joint Coordination Committee (JCC) was established as the highest decision-making level to review the implementation of the African Peace Facility (APF) and give strategic focus and orientation. It is premised on the principles of African ownership and solidarity, which also underpin the Africa-EU Partnership. It would be recalled that the APF was established by the EU in 2004 in response to a request by the AU Heads of States and Government at their Summit in Maputo in July 2003, and became operational in May 2004, with an initial envelope of Euro 250 million drawn from the 9<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund (EDF).

The aim of the APF was to provide funding to support Africa's peace and security agenda. This initial APF allocation contributed to the financing of the African Mission in the Sudan (AMIS), the CEMAC peace support operation in the Central African Republic (CAR) and capacity building within the AU Peace and Security Department. It has since proved to be a useful instrument, supporting Africa's peace and security efforts, particularly African-owned and led peace operations, as well as strengthening capacity of the RECs/RMs.

The first meeting of the JCC was held in Addis Ababa on 18 January 2005. The meetings are usually co-chaired by the AU and the European Commission (EC). The JCC has often reaffirmed the important role that the APF plays in the implementation of initiatives agreed upon under the AU-EU partnership.

Today's JCC meeting is the ninth, with the last one having been held in November 2012 in Addis Ababa.

***About the Africa-EU Summit:*** The 9<sup>th</sup> JCC is particularly important considering that it is taking place immediately after the fourth Africa-EU Summit that was held in Brussels from 2 to 3 April 2014, during which a new Roadmap (2014-2017) was adopted to guide implementation of commitments agreed upon under the Africa-EU partnership. The Summit re-affirmed peace and security as one of the five key areas of cooperation under the partnership. The others are Democracy, Good Governance and Human Rights, Human Development, Sustainable, inclusive development and Continental Integration, and Global and Emerging issues.

The key priorities under the peace and security partnership were identified as the operationalization of APSA, particularly the African Standby Force and the Continental Early Warning System, enhanced political dialogue and continued financing of African-led peace support operations for the period 2014-2017. However, with some follow-up structures such as the iJEGs (informal Joint Expert Groups) having been abolished at the Summit, the JCC stands out as one of the main avenues for coordination and follow-up of the Africa-EU partnership on peace and security.

***About the Three-Year Action Programme:*** The new Three-Year Action Programme for the African Peace Facility with a financial envelope of €750 million drawn from the 11<sup>th</sup> EDF is expected to contribute to the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in Africa through support to the operationalization of APSA, financing of African-led peace support operations and enhanced political dialogue between the AU and the EU. Support to conflict prevention and mediation efforts through the Early Response Mechanism will also be continued with a further €15 million.

There is need for the programming of APF actions to focus on results and impacts on the African peace and security landscape. The new APF should be able to finance new initiatives by the AU and RECs/RMs

that are not peace support operations in strict sense, such as the LRA mission and the AU Mission in the Sahel (MISAHEL).

***About African-led Peace Support Operations (2013 – 2014):*** Since the last JCC in 2012, the APF continued to support the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) with increased funding. In 2013 alone, a total of about €200 million was committed to AMISOM. The APF also supported the African-led International Support Mission to Mali (AFISMA) before the mission was handed over to the UN and the Mission for the consolidation of peace in the Central African Republic (MICOPAX), which was later transformed into the African-led International Support Mission in Central African Republic (MISCA). The operation will be handed over to the UN in September 2014. As earlier indicated, the AUC should emphasize the need for the APF to be expanded to include new possible missions such as the LRA, MISAHEL and the Commission of Inquiry in South Sudan among others.

***About the APSA Support Programme:*** The APF's support to capacity building through the APSA support programme continued in 2013-2014, with support to AMANI Africa II, and the Command, Control, Communication and Information System (C3IS) structure for the AU. The Training Centres Programme, which was to come to an end in 2013, was extended to 31 December 2014. Considering that this is a pilot project which is meant to improve capacities for Peace Support operations in Africa, the Commission looks forward to future consultations towards development of long-term and sustainable capacity building activities through the African Training Centers.

***About the Early Response Mechanism:*** The Early Response Mechanism (ERM) established in 2009 was increasingly used to address crises urgently across Africa in 2013, including the IGAD-led mediation efforts in South Sudan. It financed first stages of mediation activities, fact-finding missions and ad-hoc reinforcement of peace support operations planning cells. In 2013, the APF funded about seven new AU/RECs activities in the field of mediation, diplomacy or deployment preparation at the AU and RECs/RMs level, with a total amount of EUR 232 million contracted. Since the inception of the ERM, about 21 initiatives have so far been financed.