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Draft Concept Note

For

African Union Workshop on Ten Years of AU Post-conflict Reconstruction and Development Policy Implementation: A Reflection on Progress, Opportunities and Challenges

19 - 21 October 2016

**African Union Commission Headquarters
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

1. Background

Post-conflict reconstruction and development (PCRD) and peacebuilding are some of the most important challenges facing African countries emerging from conflicts. As the African Union (AU) continues to make progress in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, the imperative for comprehensive and integrated actions and plans for the recovery, reconstruction and development of societies recovering from conflicts becomes paramount.¹

Peacebuilding objectives are achieved beyond just formal peace processes and drafting of peace agreements, as it also includes responses related to long-term efforts to sustaining peace and defining the priorities for preventing conflicts. In the absence of comprehensive strategies and programmes supported by sustained funding and engagements, countries emerging from conflicts have struggled to stabilise, and to manage the involvement of a myriad of actors each pursuing their own interests, agendas and priorities.²

As part of a long-term process, it is acknowledged that PCRD and peacebuilding responses require approaches that entrench principles and values of equality, human dignity and respect for fundamental human rights. It, thus, supports establishing the necessary state infrastructure for the delivery of basic physical, legal and economic security to the population, and building confidence in the new political processes of the country.³

Of particular importance is the involvement of all segments of societies facing or recovering from conflicts. It is vital that their priority concerns are included in peacebuilding responses and plans, and that the importance of meaningful participation of previously marginalized groups, including women and youth, is recognized.

The PCRD Policy (2006) is the AU's main entry point in peacebuilding matters, being the authoritative policy that addresses the needs of communities emerging from conflicts and supports the process of sustaining peace. It was drafted, guided by the Executive Council Decision EX.CL/191 (VII) of July 2005, with the intentions to assist African countries in the process of consolidating peace and preventing the relapse of conflicts.

The Executive Council decision called for a series of approaches to be taken by AU in supporting PCRD and peacebuilding in Africa including, the development of operational guidelines at regional and national levels; the development of a database of African PCRD experts; the establishment of an AU Volunteers programme to enhance African capacity, and strengthening the capacity of the African civil society to address post-conflict issues.⁴

¹ African Union, Policy on post-conflict and reconstruction and development (2006), 2013, p.iii-iv,

² Ibid

³ Report of the Secretary-General on Peacebuilding in the Immediate Aftermath of Armed Conflict A/63/881-S/2009/304, cited in 'Concept Note: General Discussion on the protection of women's human rights in conflict and post-conflict contexts, n.d. p.15.

⁴ African Union, Policy on post-conflict and reconstruction and development (2006), 2013, p.5

As a result, the PCRDR policy became the strategic and normative framework that comprehensively elaborates the entire spectrum of initiatives that are critical for the consolidation of peace. As such, in a context where several actors and processes related to peacebuilding and PCRDR are in place, AU PCRDR plays a central role in the emerging African Peacebuilding Architecture.

Ten years after its establishment, the AU PCRDR policy framework is embedded within a wider context of the AU's support to Africa's strategic vision. The AU's *ad hoc* experience in different situations has highlighted the need to address PCRDR as part of a holistic process, with activities ranging from conflict prevention, management and resolution, peace support operations, reconciliation, reconstruction and beyond.⁵

The African Union Commission (AUC) Department of Peace and Security (PSD) and Regional Economic Communities/Mechanisms (RECs/RMs level) have, since the adoption of the PCRDR Policy, increasingly focused on establishing partnerships to operationalise the PCRDR policy and put in place the necessary mechanisms and consultative platforms for its implementation. Therefore, the AU PCRDR is an important strategic component to the implementation of the spirit and intent of Agenda 2063, including through action that brings segments of African societies to work together to build a prosperous and united continent.

It is in this context that AUC wishes to commemorate, together with its partners, the tenth year of the establishment of the PCRDR policy, by convening organizations and personalities devoted to advance PCRDR to jointly look back, review what has been achieved and what remains to do.

2. Justification

Notwithstanding the existence of a normative framework, which is conducive to the implementation of robust PCRDR strategies and responses, the effective implementation of PCRDR measures to stabilize countries where the guns have been silenced and help avoiding relapse into conflict, is still lagging. This has created numerous obstacles to the attainment of sustainable peace and successful post-conflict reconstruction.⁶

At several occasions the PSC has discussed progress made with the implementation of the PCRDR policy. The most recent discussion took place during the 593rd meeting of the PSC held on 26 April 2016. In this meeting the PSC requested the AUC to undertake a comprehensive review of the AU PCRDR architecture and submit a report to Council by late 2016, including on steps taken by the Commission in implementing the PSC's decisions on PCRDR.

The planned workshop to mark the 10th anniversary of the PCRDR policy, bringing together representatives of the Commission, RECs/RMs, Civil Society Organizations, Private Sector, the Media and Academia, will provide an opportunity to reflect on lessons

⁵ Ibid, African Union, draft African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) Roadmap 2016-2020, 2015, p.5.

⁶ African Union, African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) Roadmap 2016-2020, 2015. p.9.

learned, and deliberate on the way forward. The deliberations of the workshop will be carefully analyzed and the conclusions compiled as a response to the PSC's request.

3. Objectives and Workshop Outputs

The workshop aims at providing an opportunity for AUC and its partners to discuss and agree upon a joint strategic plan for the accelerated implementation of the PCRDR policy, based on a comprehensive review of past experiences and an in-depth analysis of challenges and opportunities.

In a nutshell, the workshop commits to deliver the following outputs:

1. Create a joint understanding among all participating parties on the basic principles and strategic pillars of the PCRDR policy, and on how they may need to be amended in view of the developments Africa has seen over the last ten years.
2. Provide participating stakeholders with an overview of examples of practical PCRDR measures implemented during the last 10 years with a comprehensive analysis of key areas of achievements, best practices and lessons learned.
3. Identify emerging challenges and new threats, but also opportunities and innovative approaches offered by the developing African peacebuilding environment.
4. Obtain analysis of the evolving role of African CSOs, private sector, media and the academia in African peacebuilding and PCRDR.
5. Agree on a draft document outlining in detail an enhanced implementation plan of PCRDR for the years to come with outcomes, outputs and indicators.
6. Develop an outline of measures to support the development of appropriate capacity building and organisational transformation strategy of the AU, RECs/RMs and Member States for more effective peacebuilding and PCRDR implementation.

4. Expected Products of the Workshop

The workshop is arranged in a way that the following two products can be expected to be delivered:

- a. A revised **background document**, reflecting the results of the review, lessons learned and guidelines for further developing the PCRDR policy and mechanisms.
- b. A document highlighting key elements of an **operational plan** for the implementation of PCRDR during the next 5 years with objectives, outcomes, outputs and indicators.

5. Format and Approaches

The workshop will be held in Addis Ababa, from 19-21 October 2016. While the first two workshop days will be devoted to an in-depth analysis of ten years of implementing the six pillars of the PCRDR policy, the third day will focus on the role of / the contributions

from partners in PCRD implementation, like UN, RECs/RMs, AfDB, World Bank and CSO. Furthermore, a common understanding and a concrete plan for the way forward will be developed. Each and every session topic will be facilitated by a leading specialist in the sector and supported by a panel of renowned experts.

Thus, to foster an interactive debate during each of the sessions, Eminent Persons with deep knowledge and hands-on experience in respect to the various pillars of the PCRD policy and its integration with the wider APSA framework will be available on the panel to provide their insights and draw conclusions from discussions and contributions both from the panelists and participants.

For robust discussions and debate, the workshop will bring together approximately 60?? participants from the AU, RECs/RMs, private sector, regional CSOs and the academia engaged in peacebuilding and PCRD.

During the first session, speakers and panelists will offer the participants a general **overview of the PCRD policy and the emerging Peacebuilding Architecture**. The session will provide a trajectory of the AU's PCRD efforts since its establishment to the present and chronicle the efforts made, the challenges faced and the prospects for the future. The objective of this session is to elicit suggestions and recommendations on how the efforts of the PCRD could be better enhanced to meet the actual needs of post conflict countries on the continent.

The following sessions are each focusing on one of the six pillars of the PCRD policy.

Security: DDR and SSR

A critical pre-requisite for post conflict reconstruction is security. Freedom from fear and freedom from want are fundamental to building the confidence and trust required for all the processes of peacebuilding, reconstruction and state consolidation. This session provides an overview of assistance provided by the UN and the AU to post conflict states in enhancing security. The objective is to encourage recommendations on how the AU can assist post conflict states in a timely, structured and systematic way to facilitate freedom from fear and want.

Humanitarian /Emergency Assistance

Most of the populations in crisis are often vulnerable and require emergency assistance and relief. The objective of this session is to identify the structures and mechanisms in place for the PCRD to be able to better interface with the institutions engaged in the provision of humanitarian/emergency assistance for the timely provision of such assistance in countries in crises.

Political Governance and Transition

Building, developing and strengthening the institutions of states to facilitate political governance, is essential for guiding states through difficult situations and for state building and consolidation. This session is to provide signposts on navigating the complexities of political governance and transitions in fragile and post conflict countries.

Socio-economic Reconstruction and Development

The sustainability of PCRDR is the ability of affected states and people to be able to progressively pursue and sustain their socio-economic aspirations in an environment of peace and stability. This session discusses how the AU PCRDR can assist post conflict states facilitate conflict sensitive, sustainable and inclusive socio-economic reconstruction.

Human Rights, Justice and Reconciliation

One of the primary reasons for violent conflict is the absence of frameworks and mechanisms for the promotion and protection of human rights and respect for the rule of law; situations that tend to get exacerbated in crisis situations. Promoting and protecting human rights as well as eliciting accountability for human rights violations are therefore essential to the consolidation of peace in post conflict countries. Yet, this could also yield unintended consequences, exacerbate differences and deepen divides. The objective of this session therefore is to provide lessons from post conflict countries that have successfully undertaken transitional justice and have put in place mechanisms for the promotion and protection of human rights and the rule of law.

Women and Youth.

Women and youth are often presented in very categorical terms in conflict and post conflict contexts. While women are on the one hand represented as vulnerable and victims, youth are usually presented as protagonists and spoilers. Given the heterogeneity of each group, neither classification is an entirely true representation. This session aims to draw lessons on how to harness the agency of women, youth and other marginalized groups in post conflict reconstruction and development processes.

Lessons learned and the way forward

The remaining sessions will be focusing on the one hand on **Partnerships** between the AU and International Organizations, Multilateral Donors, Civil Society Organizations, media and the academia and how they can be advanced and further developed, and on the other hand on **lessons learned** and drawing of conclusions for accelerated implementation of the PCRDR policy.