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**2<sup>ND</sup> INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON  
LAND, RIVER AND LAKE  
BOUNDARIES MANAGEMENT**

**MAPUTO, MOZAMBIQUE  
17 – 19 DECEMBER 2008**

**AUBP/EXP/3(VI)**

**CONCLUSIONS**

**CONCLUSIONS OF THE 2<sup>ND</sup> INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON LAND,  
RIVER AND LAKE BOUNDARIES MANAGEMENT**

**MAPUTO, MOZAMBIQUE, 17 – 19 DECEMBER 2008**

1. As part of the follow-up to the Declaration on the African Union Border Programme (AUBP) and its Implementation Modalities, as adopted by the Conference of African Ministers in charge of Border Issues, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 7 June 2007, and subsequently endorsed by the Executive Council of the African Union (AU) at its 11<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session held in Accra, Ghana, from 27 to 29 June 2007, the AU and the Government of Mozambique jointly organized the Second International Symposium on Land, River and Lake Boundaries Management, in Maputo, from 17 to 19 December 2008. The Symposium was opened by Honorable Benvinda Levy, Minister of Justice of the Republic of Mozambique, and Mr. El Ghassim Wane, Head of the Conflict Management Division (CMD) of the Peace and Security Department, on behalf of the AU Commission.
2. The Symposium was attended by the following Member States: Algeria, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Comoros, Republic of Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Republic of Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.
3. The following Regional Economic Communities (RECs) were also in attendance: CENSAD, ECCAS and ECOWAS.
4. In addition, the United Nations Secretariat, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UN-ECA), the Organization of American States (OAS), the World Bank, as well as the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) and a number of experts from China, Finland, France, Germany, Thailand, United Kingdom, USA, the International Border Research Unit (IBRU) of the University of Durham and the University of Kent (United Kingdom), were also represented at the Symposium.
5. The Symposium, which featured a number of technical presentations in plenary sessions and discussions both in plenary and working groups, provided an opportunity for the sharing of ideas and experiences on issues relating to the delimitation, demarcation, reaffirmation and management of boundaries, as well as to cross-border cooperation.
6. At the end of the deliberations, the Symposium reached the following conclusions:

## **A. General considerations**

7. The participants stressed the need for continued and sustained efforts by the AU Member States and Commission, the RECs and other stakeholders to ensure the effective implementation of the AUBP, which provides a framework for comprehensively addressing border issues, both with respect to delimitation and demarcation and cross-border cooperation, with the overall objective of contributing to the prevention of conflicts and the promotion of integration.

8. The participants also underlined the continued relevance of the conclusions of the First International Symposium on Land and River Boundary Demarcation and Maintenance in Support of Borderland Development, held in Bangkok, Thailand, from 7 to 9 November 2006.

9. The participants agreed as follows:

- (i) the centrality of the principle of the respect of borders existing on achievement of national independence, as enshrined in the Charter of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), resolution AHG/Res.16(I) on border disputes between African States, adopted by the 1<sup>st</sup> Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU, held in Cairo, Egypt, in July 1964, and article 4(b) of the Constitutive Act of the AU, to the continent's efforts to define its boundaries;
- (ii) boundary problems in Africa are not uniquely African. Thus, valuable lessons can be learned from delimitation and demarcation experiences in other parts of the world. Best practices in Africa can usefully be shared among African countries and with other continents;
- (iii) boundaries may be perceived by borderland populations as imposed barriers which do not reflect local realities. Strategies need to be developed by Governments to sensitize and involve borderland populations in the marking of borders, to ensure that clearly delimited and appropriately demarcated boundaries are seen as a valuable foundation for borderland development rather than a threat to local communities. Borderland populations could also be involved in the development and implementation of effective border management strategies;
- (iv) effective delimitation and demarcation take time. 2012 is the date set by African leaders for the completion of delimitation and demarcation of Africa's boundaries where such an exercise has not yet taken place [Memorandum of Understanding on the Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA) adopted by the OAU Assembly of Head of States and Government held in Durban, South Africa, in July 2002]. Recognizing that the achievement of this objective will require more sustained efforts, participants stressed the need for the

- AU Member States to do whatever is in their power in order, as much as possible, to meet the time-limit set out by the Declaration on the CSSDCA;
- (v) delimitation, demarcation, mapping and management are essential steps towards creating peaceful and prosperous borderlands, but on their own they will not achieve these goals. Hence, the need for sustained efforts to promote cross-border cooperation and set targets to be achieved within a specific period of time, including the establishment of joint border management mechanisms between Member States. Reaffirmation of boundaries (e.g. erection of intermediate markers) and their maintenance will facilitate the achievement of this objective;
  - (vi) States engaged in boundary reaffirmation should, where necessary, consider agreeing on Protocols to existing delimitation and demarcation instruments;
  - (vii) rivers and lakes boundaries create special challenges in terms of (a) delimitation and demarcation; and (b) the management of shared water and other resources. The sharing of experiences and best practices in these areas is particularly important;
  - (viii) some States face particular challenges in boundary demarcation due to the presence of landmines in border areas. The international community should support these countries to clear mined areas in order to facilitate demarcation exercises and other cross-border activities;
  - (ix) differing interpretations of terms used in the definition of boundaries can lead to disagreements over delimitation and demarcation of boundaries. The development of a multi-language lexicon of relevant terms should be a goal of the AUBP;
  - (x) the implementation of the AUBP requires continued collaboration between the AU, Member States, RECs and other partners. Early completion of the questionnaire on the status of African borders (sent to Member States in April 2008) would be a valuable contribution to the implementation of the AUBP.

## **B. Specific recommendations**

10. The participants made the following recommendations:
  - (i) the establishment, by the AU Commission, of a working group to prepare a practical handbook on delimitation and demarcation in Africa, highlighting best practices in/guidelines for delimitation, demarcation, maintenance and of African boundaries reaffirmation, as well as recovery of boundary marks. This working group could also be charged with preparing a lexicon of relevant terms as highlighted above;

- (ii) the launching, by the AU Commission, of a consultancy to: (a) identify options for enhancing boundary delimitation and demarcation research and training capacity in African universities and technical agencies (e.g. national survey authorities), and (b) map African capacity needs in delimitation, demarcation, reaffirmation and maintenance and source for assistance from development partners;
- (iii) the implementation, by the AU Commission, of steps aimed at facilitating the communication by the former colonial powers of all information in their possession concerning the delimitation and demarcation of African boundaries, in line with paragraph 5 (a - iii) of the Declaration on the AUBP and its Implementation Modalities;
- (iv) the reinforcement of the human resource capacity of the AUBP Unit of the AU Commission, in order to assist Member States in the acquisition of documents relevant to boundary delimitation and demarcation exercise from colonial archives;
- (v) the convening, by the AU, of an international Symposium in Africa focusing on border management, cross-border cooperation and borderland development;
- (vi) parties to border disputes and conflicts should be encouraged to initiate and pursue bilateral negotiations on all problems relating to the delimitation, demarcation and maintenance of their borders with, where appropriate, the support of the AU and other African regional institutions;
- (vii) the promotion of an "African Border Day", to highlight the importance of the AUBP and encourage further efforts towards its implementation, particularly with respect to delimitation, demarcation and management, as well as cross-border development and cooperation;
- (viii) the establishment by Member States, as soon as possible, of National Boundary Commissions or similar agencies (where they do not exist), and legal bilateral arrangements to handle boundary matters between them.