Mr. President,

Distinguished members of the United Nations Security Council

Ladies and Gentlemen

1. Thank you for the opportunity to brief the United Nations Security Council, on this important theme on Enhancing Capacities in peace and security in Africa. I would like to express the gratitude of the African Union Commission and my own special appreciation to the Peoples Republic of China for this invitation.

2. I am delighted to make this presentation to the Security Council under the Chinese Presidency whose contribution to peace and security in Africa has been invaluable. Let me recall the donation of $100million support provided for the enhancement of the ASF and its regular contribution to AMISOM for the last years, to name few.
3. I am grateful for the comprehensive presentation of Secretary General Antonio Guterres and pay tribute to his unflinching commitment to peace, security and stability in Africa as well as his tireless efforts to consolidate and further promote the strategic partnership between the AU and the UN, including in the area of peace and security. Let me reassure you, Mr. Secretary General, of the full respect and support of Africa.

4. The African Union is an indispensable partner in promoting peace and security in Africa. In doing so, the African Union is invariably contributing to addressing global security challenges, which has become increasingly complex, transnational and in fact trans-regional. Over the last decade, the African Union has mandated or authorized the deployment of more than 100,000 uniformed and civilian personnel, many of whom are deployed in some of the most high-risk and volatile environments. This has come at a huge cost to human lives. It is noteworthy to mention here that the number of casualties by African troops in peace support operations in the last decade exceeds the combined casualties experienced in UN peacekeeping missions over the last 70 years. This is a compelling reality to demonstrate the commitment of Africans and the African Union to durable peace and stability on the continent.

5. Despite these sacrifices and commitment, African troops are faced with some of the most challenging situations due to inadequate force enablers and multipliers, as well as financial resource gaps. Last week, the African Union Peace and Security Council declared that AMISOM had successfully achieved
its mandate over the last decade on the basis of a recently concluded lessons learned study by the African Union Commission. Yet, AMISOM remains the least resourced mission in comparison with other deployed regional or international enforcement missions with similar mandates.

**Excellencies**

6. It is against this background, that I would like to make a few proposals for your consideration on how best to support African capacities in the prevention and effective response to peace and security challenges in Africa:

7. **First**, the United Nations and the international community should promote greater strategic cooperation and coherence in the prevention of conflicts in Africa. Conflict prevention remains the most cost effective conflict management tools but yet the least resourced. I would therefore like to recommend to Council that both the African Union Commission and the United Nations Secretariat should establish an institutional approach that will allow for real-time consultations, joint assessments, and joint analysis with a view to recommend coherent options to our respective policy organs that will allow for timely prevention of conflicts including but not limited to preventive diplomacy. The *April 2017 Joint AU-UN Framework on the Enhanced Cooperation in Peace and Security* represents a good foundation through which to institutionalize this practice. I have already established an internal secretariat within the Peace and Security Department of the AU to develop an implementation matrix of the Joint Framework, and dedicated staff has been assigned to fulfill this objective. Some of the concrete priorities we are working on in the area of conflict prevention include:
• Enhancing coordination between the AU and relevant AU organs and regional economic communities in order to create better synergies between the African Governance Architecture (AGA) and the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA);

• Strengthening platforms for engagement in early warning issues through regular horizon scanning to the Peace and Security Council;

• Assisting our Member States to strengthen their own national peace infrastructure;

• Assisting member states to identify and address local, political and socio-economic root causes of conflict. In this regard, the African Union has developed the Continental Structural Conflict Prevention Framework that allow member states to identify their resilience and vulnerabilities and bring various stakeholders together to work on a mitigation strategy. As, we speak one Member States is currently going through this exercise;

• Strengthening efforts to encourage member states to sign, ratify and domesticate AU instruments related to conflict prevention;

• Supporting member states in the delimitation, demarcation and reaffirmation of African borders with the objective to prevent conflict but also to transform borders from barriers to bridges.

6. **Second**, the enhancement of the operational readiness of the African Standby Force must be fully supported. The African Union and its Regional standby forces have put in tremendous efforts to develop and operationalize the African Standby Force (ASF) and its Rapid Deployment Capability (RDC) as one of its conflict management tool, as enshrined in the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). This was evidenced by the declaration of Full
Operational Capability of the ASF In January 2016 by the African Union (AU) Specialized Technical Committee on Defense Safety and Security (STCDSS). Despite this historic achievement, the Ministers of Defence of African Union member states further recognized that there are challenges ahead, especially with the mandating process, funding and logistics support and therefore called for further strengthening the ASF. The enhancement process will be achieved within the framework of the Maputo Five Year Workplan on the enhancement of the ASF, which has been finalized. As I speak to you, a High level technical team is undertaking the verification of the capacities of the five regions of the ASF. I will encourage Council members and partners to support the implementation of the ASF strategic workplan.

7. **Third**, the spread of violent extremism remains a source of concern. The recent authorization of regional coalitions such the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) against Boko Haram and the G5 Sahel force are innovative ways through which the African Union and its Member States are responding to the prevalence of terrorist activities within the framework of the African Union Peace and Security Architecture. Yet, prolonged conflicts and governance deficits provide fertile grounds for a cycle of radicalization and extremism. Therefore, the African Union and United Nations must work together in resolving seemingly intractable conflicts by building resilience through sustainable post-conflict reconstruction and development initiatives. This entails supporting the African Union’s efforts in countering violent extremism through greater investment in political, human rights, humanitarian and developmental approaches. In addition, the African Union Counter-terrorism Fund, as well as activities of the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism, the Nouakchott and Djibouti Processes are
important coordination platforms through which the African Union can be supported and in the fight against terrorism. We look forward to closely working with the new Under Secretary General and Head of the UN Office on Counter Terrorism, Mr. Vladimir Ivanovich Voronkov.

8. **Fourth**, the financing of peace support operations remains a perennial issue of discussion, which we hope can be resolved soon. In this respect, I am pleased to note that the implementation of the Kigali Summit decision on financing is now underway. We are convinced that the efforts that we have invested in the African Union since 2001 to realize Alternative Sources of Funding will be achieved. As a way of enhancing our accountability measures, the African Union Commission has requested the United Nations and the European Union to nominate representatives to the governance structure of the Peace Fund. Yet, it is clear that Africa will not be able to fund peace initiatives on its own. Therefore, the prospects of predictable and sustainable funding for addressing peace and security challenges including through the utilization of UN Assessed Contributions remains a common African position. We, therefore look forward to further deliberation and possible decision by this Council in September 2017, on the dedicated support from the UN to all UNSC-mandated African peace support operations.

**Excellencies**

9. To conclude, you will agree with me that the new leaderships of the African Union and the United Nations are determined to promote greater synergy between peace, security and development. Both organizations have set mutually reinforcing, ambitious but not insurmountable strategic priorities as reflected in
Agenda 2063 and Vision 2030 respectively. We continue to count on the political leadership and guidance of our member states especially this Council in the realization of our institutional mandates. Without your political cooperation and support, the attainment of collective security within Africa and beyond will be difficult to achieve.

I thank you for your kind attention