Joint Communiqué

The 9th meeting of the African Peace Facility (APF) Joint Coordination Committee (JCC) took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 3rd June 2014, under the co-chairmanship of the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union Commission (AUC), Smail Chergui, and the European External Action Service Managing Director for Africa, Nicholas Westcott.

The meeting brought together representatives of the AU Commission, European Commission, and the European External Action Service, as well as the Representatives of the following Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Regional Mechanisms (RMs) for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution: Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA), the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), East African Community (EAC), Economic Community of Central African States (ECAS), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), the Eastern Africa Standby Force Coordinating Mechanism (EASFCOM) and the North Africa Regional Capability (NARC).

Representatives of the European Union (EU) Delegation to the African Union (AU) as well as EU Delegations to RECs and RMs also attended the meeting.

The meeting opened with a briefing on the results of the EU-Africa Summit, which has provided a new momentum in Africa-EU relations and has in parallel renewed joint and strong commitment to Peace and Security as one of the five key areas of cooperation of the Africa-EU partnership. Africa and EU representatives recognized the important results achieved so far, in particular by African-led peace support operations and by missions and operations deployed in Africa by the EU. It was noted that the capacity building programmes supported by the APF have significantly contributed to developing capacities of AU and the RECs/RMs in planning and deployment of Peace Support Operations (AFISMA, ECOMIB, AMISOM and MISCA among others). Both sides also underlined the need to address the root causes of conflict and the security development nexus as well as to enhance dialogue, to implement common approaches and to strengthen coordination in crisis management.

The meeting also illustrated the overall orientations of the EU future support under the 2014-16 APF action programme. The EU reiterated its intention to continue funding the APF and to utilise the full range of EU instruments to support peace and security in the continent. It was agreed to discuss ways of enhancing the consultative process to prepare actions under the APF and to ensure proper coordination, coherence and efficiency of the
capacity development activities to be conducted in the coming years. Both sides stressed the need for close cooperation between the continental and regional levels and for APF support to remain under continental coordination and management to ensure coherence, continuity and sustainability of the operationalization of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) as the main continental peace and security framework. The EU and the AU, in line with the EU-Africa Summit Roadmap, called for the mobilization of additional African and alternative international resources, in order to improve the predictability and financial sustainability of African peace and security activities, especially African Peace Support Operations.

The meeting noted the presentation of the APF evaluation (2013) which confirmed that the instrument has been a game changer in many ways, enabling collective African security actions anchored in the political role of the AU Peace and Security Council (AU PSC). It was further noted that some recommendations of the external evaluation have been taken into account to inform the upcoming APF action program for the period 2014-2016.

On Capacity development, the meeting noted the progress achieved so far. The APF evaluation echoed the importance of further strengthening the APSA; ensuring a clear, long-term, sustainable and focused strategic orientation which links more effectively with Peace Support Operations. It was noted that there will be continuity in financing of APSA support programmes. The APF support to APSA will be even more focused on building lasting capacities and will benefit from the recommendations of the upcoming APSA assessment. Furthermore, it was agreed that increased coherence and complementarity between the APF and the 11th EDF regional indicative programmes and other relevant instruments should be promoted without compromising the thrust of the APF as a continental facility in support of APSA.

The meeting further received a review of Peace Support Operations (PSOs) funded under the APF. The meeting noted that African-led PSOs have proven added value and that close cooperation between the AU and RECs/RMs is key to the success of regional initiatives. Both sides agreed on the need for the APF to consider supporting new types of responses to emerging threats including trans-boundary issues initiated by the AU and the RECs/RMs and to conduct regular joint assessments of the missions aiming at providing a common framework to enable exit strategies and sustainability.

The meeting exchanged views on the Early Response Mechanism (ERM), which has facilitated increased crisis prevention and early crisis management efforts in more than 21 initiatives since 2009. It was acknowledged that ERM flexibility and rapid decision-making has proved to be effective in providing immediate support to specific urgent activities, first stages of mediation activities, fact-finding missions and ad-hoc reinforcement of PSO planning cells. The meeting recalled the short-term nature of this Mechanism to be used for emergency needs, bearing in mind that there are other instruments that can be used for the medium and long term. The EU announced the intention to provide longer support of up to 12 months for ERM actions in the new APF action program. The EU noted the need to further reinforce monitoring of the individual actions, as well as funding disbursements. Consequently, a revision of the ERM guidelines to enhance implementation will be further discussed.
The meeting underlined the importance of having regular meetings of the JCC at appropriate level. In line with the Roadmap of the Africa-EU summit, the meeting noted the need to widen the consultations on Peace and Security issues to other stakeholders including civil society organizations. These consultations could be organized in the margins of the JCC meetings or of the joint annual forums foreseen under the Africa-EU summit.

The AU, the RECs/RMs and the EU expressed deep appreciation for the common achievements the APF continued to promote to foster the advancement of peace and security in Africa.

Addis Ababa, 3rd June 2014