

AFRICAN UNION

الاتحاد الأفريقي



UNION AFRICAINE

UNIÃO AFRICANA

**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, P.O. Box: 3243 Tel.: (251-11) 5513 822 Fax:
(251-11) 5519 321**

Email: situationroom@africa-union.org

**13th ORDINARY MEETING OF AFRICAN CHIEFS OF DEFENCE STAFF
AND HEADS OF SAFETY AND SECURITY, WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK
OF THE 10TH ORDINARY MEETING OF THE SPECIALISED TECHNICAL
COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE, SEFETY AND SECURITY**

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

8 JANUARY 2018

**Statement by Ambassador Smail Chergui,
Commissioner for Peace and Security
African Union Commission**

- **Chairperson of the African Chiefs of Defence Staff and Heads of Safety and Security, General David Muhoozi,**
- **Members of the Bureau of the Specialized Technical Committee on Defence, Safety and Security,**
- **Generals and Representatives of Member States,**
- **Representatives of Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms,**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen**

I have the honour, on behalf of the Chairperson of the Commission, and on my own behalf, to welcome you all to the 13th ordinary meeting of African Chiefs of Defence Staff and Heads of Safety and Security being held in preparation for the 10th ordinary meeting of the Specialised Technical Committee on Defence, Safety and Security (STCDSS) to take place tomorrow, 9 January 2018.

I wish to thank the Member States and the Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs) for their continued commitment to the promotion of peace in our continent, as evidenced by your presence in this meeting. I would also like to thank Professor Ibrahim Gambari, Leader of the independent Panel of Experts on the Verification, Confirmation and Validation of ASF pledged capabilities for being with us in this meeting.

Allow me at the onset to wish all of you Happy New Year 2018. The outgoing year 2017, as you may recall, witnessed a mixture of major challenges and opportunities on the peace and security landscape of our continent. It is my hope that in this New Year, Africa

and its people will enjoy more opportunities and be more able to overcome the various challenges facing the continent.

The annual meeting of the STCDSS is a key event in addressing peace and security issues in Africa as they unfold.

As you are all aware, the ASF is a key element of the African Peace and Security Architecture as articulated in the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the AU Peace and Security Council. Indeed, across the past several years, the ASF has remained to date, the most glaring gap in the on-going implementation of the African Peace and Security Architecture, thereby impacting on Africa's capacity to more proactively and timeously prevent conflicts or resolve existing ones. The decisions taken by the Assembly and the PSC have since created the requisite momentum to fill this gap. I am, therefore delighted to note that key milestones have been achieved since your last meeting held in Addis Ababa, from 1 to 4 June 2016.

As we are meeting, we have in mind the Declaration of the 9th meeting of the STCDSS held in Addis Ababa, on 4 June 2016, which directed the AU Commission to take the necessary steps towards the enhancement of the full operational capacity of the ASF and other related issues aimed at enhancing the Commission's ability to rapidly deploy and effectively manage peace support operations (PSOs). Also, this meeting is taking place from the background of the

decisions adopted by the Assembly of the Union on the development of the ASF.

Since then, it is important to note that significant progress has been made in implementing previous STCDSS decisions, particularly with respect to the following:

First, as per your directive and pursuant to Assembly/dec.589 (XXVI) of January 2016, the Commission established a Panel of Experts led by Professor Ibrahim Gambari that assessed and determined the operational readiness status of the ASF pledged standby capabilities in each REC/RM. The meeting of Experts has deliberated on the Report of the Panel of Experts and their recommendations are part of the report which will be presented to you shortly.

Second, significant progress has already been achieved in addressing some of the gaps identified by Professor Gambari and his team. One such achievement relates to the Continental Logistics Base which I launched, together with the Prime Minister of Cameroon, on 5 January 2018 in Douala. We applaud the Government of the Republic of the Cameroon for its commitment to the African cause for peace.

Third, we are also on the final stages of the ASF Command, Control, Communication and Information Systems (C3IS) acquisition project and the delivery, installation, training and utilisation equipment are expected to be completed by September 2018.

Fourth, as part of the efforts to operationalize the Peace Fund, the Commission has developed an AU Common Costs Document which details categories of support that are expected to be provided and funded by the AU under Window Three of the Peace Fund-titled PSO Financing when AU mandates a PSO. This document is essential to guide the Commission in facilitating planning, rapid deployment and sustenance of AUPSOs and needs your endorsement.

Fifth, pursuant to Assembly/Dec. 627(XXVIII) of January 2017, the Commission has also submitted for your consideration the draft Statute on the Establishment of the AU Special Fund on Prevention and Combating Terrorism and Violent Extremism in Africa. I am aware that the Experts recommended that consideration be given towards possible integration of this Fund into the AU Peace Fund in order to avoid duplication in AU financing arrangements on peace and security. This said, as per AU procedure, the draft statute, once considered by this STCDSS meeting, will be submitted for consideration to the Specialized Technical Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs in 2018.

Sixth, on the operationalization of the African Union Mechanism on Police Cooperation (AFRIPOL), pursuant to Assembly Dec.636(XXVIII) of January 2017 that established AFRIPOL, the First General Assembly of AFRIPOL was held in Algiers, Algeria from the 14 to 16 May 2017. The First General Assembly approved its draft Rules of Procedure. It is expected that the Draft Rules will be endorsed by the

current STCDSS meeting and subsequently be submitted to STC on Justice and Legal Affairs for consideration in line with the established AU procedure.

**Chairperson,
African Chiefs of Defence Staff,
Heads of Safety and Security,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The above achievements point to the fact that the ASF, as well as other related efforts aimed at ensuring prevention and response to conflicts and crises on the Continent, are being crowned by success. The Commission will continue to rely on your guidance and support on how to further consolidate on-going efforts to deepen peace and security on the continent, including achieving our objective to Silence the Guns in Africa.

I would like to stress that sustainable and predictable financing of AU Peace Support Operations remains critical. African resources should be the primary means to fund peace and security efforts on the continent. Sustainable and predictable funding mechanisms by Member States must be appropriately reserved for Africa to solve its peace and security challenges with the necessary autonomy in line with our principle of African Solutions to African Problems.

Let me take this opportunity to sincerely thank the Experts for the work they carried out over the past two days, which provides a solid working base for our meeting. The report will be presented to you shortly.

In conclusion, I would like to highlight that we all have a shared responsibility to sustain our efforts in strengthening the implementation of the African Peace and Security Architecture and to ensure that we succeed in attaining our objectives of building a peaceful and stable continent and to have the Africa we want as per our aspirations in Agenda 2063.

Thank you for your kind attention.