



PRESS RELEASE

Meeting of Ministers on African Border Issues concludes with the adoption of the Addis Ababa Declaration on AUBP

Addis Ababa, 7 October 2016 – The African Union Border Programme (AUBP) held, on 6 October 2016, a Meeting of Ministers on African Border Issues, at the African Union Headquarters in Addis Ababa, to review the progress made on the implementation of the AUBP and to discuss measures for its further consolidation. The Meeting, which was preceded by a Preparatory Meeting of Governmental Experts from 3 to 5 October 2016, adopted the Addis Ababa Declaration on the AUBP which calls on all Member States to delimitate and demarcate their borders by 2022.

In his opening remarks, Ambassador Smail Chergui, Commissioner for Peace and Security, underscored the need to the principle of peaceful settlement of border disputes and the commitment to delimit and demarcate African boundaries as factors of peace, security, and economic and social progress. *“We must reflect on ways and means to find lasting and sustainable solutions to the ongoing border disputes in our continent,”* he said. *“This meeting comes at a crucial time when we are facing major challenges on terrorism, cross-border crime, illegal trafficking and illegal migration that calls for joint efforts for management of our borders,”* he further stated.

The Ministers highlighted the significant progress made by the AUBP on the national, regional and continental levels in the areas of delimitation and demarcation, cross-border cooperation and capacity building. They also noted the challenges in the implementation of the AUBP, which reflect the need for continued efforts to strengthen African capacities regarding border issues.

The Ministers recommended for the extension of the deadline of 2017 set by the Assembly of the Union in July 2011 in Malabo for the Delimitation and Demarcation of all African boundaries from 2017 to 2022. They further recommended the establishment of an annual review mechanism on the African Border Day (June 7), to facilitate regular assessment of the AUBP’s progress and identify and manage challenges as they arise. Further, they stressed the importance of ratifying the AU Convention on Cross-Border Cooperation in order to foster regional integration and the harmonization of policies across the African continent.

The Meeting was organized in the spirit of aspiration four(4) of the AU Agenda 2063 for, “A Peaceful and Secure Africa”, and brought together Ministers from 46 AU Member States, representatives from the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), as well as representatives from the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD), the Committee of Intelligence and Security Services of Africa (CISSA), the Federal Republic of Germany, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the European Union (EU) and staff from the AU Commission.

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