9th JOINT STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA
14 SEPTEMBER 2022

OPENING REMARKS BY DR ALHAJI SARJOH BAH,
DIRECTOR, CONFLICT MANAGEMENT DIRECTORATE
OPENING REMARKS TO THE 9TH JOINT STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

- Defense Attaches from the MNJTF Troop Contributing Countries
- Representatives of the MNJTF Troop Contributing Countries
- Representatives of the LCBC Executive Secretariat
- Representatives of the MNJTF Headquarters
- Chief of Staff of the ASF
- Representatives of the UNOAU
- AU Strategic Partners supporting the MNJTF
- Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of the Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, I welcome you all to the 9th Joint Steering Committee (JSC) meeting. It aims to facilitate coordination and information sharing on the African Union’s (AU) additional support to the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF). As you know, the meeting was postponed since August 2021 due to unavoidable circumstances. I appreciate the MNJTF operations’ tremendous achievements against Boko Haram that have paved the way for thousands of Internally Displaced People (IDP) to return to their home areas and facilitated the resumption of humanitarian and stabilisation activities in areas formerly affected by Boko Haram.

Following the Peace and Security Council’s renewal of the MNJTF mandate at its 1057th meeting held on 14 January 2022, the AU Commission maintained the provision of this additional support to the MNJTF. The Commission and the European Union also conducted a Joint Mission to the MNJTF in April 2022 to ascertain the implementation status and assess this fund’s reach post-2022. The team noted the need to strengthen the AU Mission Support Team’s (MST) capacities to deliver on its mandate to monitor, report and advise on human rights and humanitarian issues in line with the AU compliance policies.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The EU-AU joint mission is open to revising some lines of support, such as Mission Subsistence Allowance, to align with all African Peace Support Operations and expand it beyond logistics and services to other stabilisation activities. The Commission will continue to engage the EU on these matters. This meeting may therefore wish to consider the support needed by the MNJTF mission beyond 2023 and the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) Regional Stabilisation Strategy to fully consolidate the MNJTF achievements and realise the MNJTF’s mandate of eliminating the Boko Haram threat. We are grateful to the EU for providing this support through the AU to the MNJTF.

The Commission is currently recruiting a senior stabilisation and recovery officer as part of the civilian component, which complements the MNJTF by implementing the Regional Stabilisation Strategy. The Commission will be recruiting three human rights officers, a humanitarian liaison officer, and a senior finance officer to strengthen the Mission Support Team at the MNJTF Headquarters.
I believe that your discussions and recommendations will inform further consultations on the comprehensive support required by the MNJTF, especially beyond 2022. These may include the C3IS; human rights compliance; flight hours; maintenance cost, petrol, oil and lubricant; mission subsistence allowance, stabilisation activities and quick impact projects, among others.

I would like to conclude by commending the leadership of the LCBC and MNJTF, as well as the troop-contributing countries, for their unshakable commitment to the fight against Boko Haram. The MNJTF’s successful operations in the Tumbuns in the Lake Chad are proof of the gains made in our collective resolve against Boko Haram. We must hold on to these successes to silence the guns in the Lake Chad Basin region.

Thank you.