REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMISSION
ON THE YEAR OF PEACE AND SECURITY IN AFRICA
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I. INTRODUCTION

1. In paragraph 23 of the Tripoli Declaration on the Elimination of Conflicts in Africa and the Promotion of Sustainable Peace [SP/Assembly/PS/Decl.(I)], adopted by the Special Session of the Assembly of the Union on the Consideration and Resolution of Conflicts in Africa, held on 31 August 2009, the Heads of State and Government decided to proclaim 2010 as the Year of Peace and Security in Africa. In this respect, the Assembly requested me to prepare a detailed programme which would identify concrete steps that could be taken to promote peace, security and stability on the continent, and to submit the said programme to its next ordinary session.

2. The present report is submitted as a follow-up to above-mentioned paragraph of the Tripoli Declaration. It first recalls the background against which the Declaration was adopted, then outlines the key elements of the Year of Peace and Security in Africa, and concludes with observations on the way forward.

II. BACKGROUND

3. As indicated in my report to the Tripoli Special Session [SP/ASSEMBLY/PS/RPT(I)], of the many challenges facing our continent, the quest for peace and security is undoubtedly the most pressing. Over the past two decades, Africa has witnessed a number of long-term, severe and, partly, interrelated crises and violent conflicts. The causes of this worrying situation are many. They include ethnic and religious extremism; corruption; exclusionary definitions of citizenship; poverty and disease; the illegal exploitation of Africa’s renewable and non-renewable natural resources; and the phenomenon of mercenarism. This situation is aggravated by the illicit proliferation, circulation and trafficking of small arms and light weapons and the scourge of drug trafficking, which poses an ever increasing threat to peace and security in Africa [Statement of Commitment to Peace and Security In Africa, issued by the Heads of State and Government of the Member States of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union - PSC/AHG/ST.(X), 25 May 2004 ].

4. The continent also continues to face the threats posed by terrorism and transnational organized crime. Furthermore, Africa has recently witnessed the resurgence of unconstitutional changes of Government, which represents a serious setback to the democratization processes. Mention should also be made of the emerging trend of election-related violence and conflicts, and the persistence of border disputes and conflicts. Of equal concern are the implications of climate change and its resulting consequences for our quest for peace and the efforts being made in this respect.

5. Since its launch in Durban, in July 2002, the AU has taken major strides to address in a comprehensive and holistic manner the challenges of conflict prevention, management and resolution in Africa. The inauguration of the Peace and Security Council (PSC), in Addis Ababa, in May 2004, and the development of the
necessary institutional and normative frameworks, including the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), to address conflicts on the continent are evidence of the AU’s unwavering determination in dealing with issues of peace and security in Africa.

6. Furthermore, to address the root causes of conflicts in a holistic and systematic manner, the AU has adopted a number of instruments on human rights, governance, the rule of law, democracy, elections, disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation, terrorism, and good neighbourliness. These represent a consolidated framework of norms and principles, whose observance will considerably reduce the risk of conflict and violence on the continent and support the consolidation of peace.

7. Clearly, in the past few years, the number of violent conflicts has been significantly reduced, and important advances, while still fragile, have been made, thanks to the collective determination and efforts of Africa, with the support of its partners. At the same time, far too many African countries remain trapped in a vicious cycle of conflict with its attendant deadly consequences. Armed conflicts in Africa kill thousands of people every year; create humanitarian disasters; wipe out livelihoods and wealth that ordinary people have worked hard to accumulate over their lifetimes; and make sustainable economic development impossible. There is also a more profound loss: the destruction of hope for a better future.

8. It is against this background that the decision to proclaim 2010 as the Year of Peace and Security was taken. In this respect, it is worth recalling paragraph 9 of the Tripoli Declaration, which reads as follows: “We are determined to deal once and for all with the scourge of conflicts and violence on our continent, acknowledging our shortcomings and errors, committing our resources and our best people, and missing no opportunity to push forward the agenda of conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction. We, as leaders, simply cannot bequeath the burden of conflicts to the next generation of Africans”. While the challenge of achieving peace, security and stability across the entire African continent is clearly an undertaking of many years, the Year of Peace and Security offers nonetheless a unique opportunity to give further impetus to the efforts aimed at ending conflicts and sustaining peace.

III. KEY ELEMENTS OF THE YEAR OF PEACE AND SECURITY IN AFRICA

9. The Year of Peace and Security will be an opportunity for African people and leaders, as well as African institutions, in partnership with the international community, to review current efforts at peace on the continent, with a view to strengthening them and, where appropriate, launching new initiatives for the promotion of peace and security. Given the multiplicity of needs in this area, the Year of Peace and Security will make it possible to prioritise those activities that will have a ripple effect in terms of innovation in approaches, impact and sustainability. Whilst celebrating the achievements of the past decade, the programme for the Year of Peace and Security will also seek to build on them to address ongoing challenges. The success of the initiative will lie in the extent to which spaces are opened up for all stakeholders to play complementary roles in the promotion of peace and security.
A) **Objectives and principles**

10. The aim of the Year of Peace and Security is to create a momentum, so that by the end of 2010, concrete results will have materialized, in particular, creating a more enabling political and social environments. It is expected that from 2010 onward, peace efforts will be boosted, and will generate more effective results on the ground and make peace on the entire continent a reality in the near future.

11. The Year of Peace and Security in Africa will focus upon five major objectives:

   (i) giving added momentum to peace and security efforts on the continent;
   
   (ii) giving greater visibility to ongoing and past efforts by the AU on the ground to promote peace and security;
   
   (iii) speeding up the implementation of commitments made by Member States to various AU's instruments relating to peace and security;
   
   (iv) linking official efforts to promote peace and security with the efforts being undertaken on the ground by ordinary communities; and
   
   (v) mobilizing resources to support peace and security efforts on the continent.

12. All the activities that will be carried out within the framework of the Year of Peace and Security will be guided by the following principles:

   (i) working through partnerships;
   
   (ii) promoting inclusiveness (engaging the Regional Economic Communities – RECs, civil society, the private sector, and the international community);
   
   (iii) promoting African leadership on peace and security on the continent;
   
   (iv) inspiring the African people to promote peace and security;
   
   (v) bringing together people in peaceful activities; and
   
   (vi) highlighting success stories and existing efforts, as well as addressing the challenges at hand.

13. The overarching message for all the activities that will be carried out and the advocacy programme is, quite simply, **"Make Peace Happen"**. This message highlights the need to mobilize all stakeholders for them to take ownership of this initiative and commit to actions that will make possible the achievement of peace.
B) **Overview of activities to be undertaken**

14. The Year of Peace and Security will act as a coordinating campaign for peace and security activities in Africa. The programme of activities will culminate in the United Nations Peace Day, on 21st September 2010. This day will be owned by Africans and will be called “Make Peace Happen Day”. Efforts will be geared towards ensuring that on the 21st of September, there will be no violence, no conflict, no fighting. The objective will be to show that peace is possible in Africa and to put **peace into practice** through a **collective and cooperative moment of unity**.

15. Concretely, the activities that will mark the Year of Peace will consist of existing elements of the AU activities, scheduled in 2010, along with additional activities.

   **a) Existing AU programme of activities**

16. The different AU institutions have their programme of activities and budget set for 2010. The Commission is in the process of compiling, in a chronological order, all the specific planned activities/events of AUC Departments, Regional Offices, Specialized Institutions, Field Missions in conflict zones and other AU Institutions (Pan-African Parliament - PAP, Economic Social and Cultural Council – ECOSOC, African Commission on Human and People Rights – ACHPR, NEPAD, etc.). All these will be retained as essential elements of the programme to mark the Year of Peace and Security.

17. For instance, a major event and signpost of progress during 2010 will be the operationalization of the African Standby Force (ASF). This will mark an important step in the overall process aimed at making the APSA fully operational. The 2010 exercise ‘AMANI Africa’ will be one key event to mark the Year of Peace and Security. Other major events will include the commencement of the implementation process of the African Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty (Pelindaba Treaty), which entered into force on 15 July 2009, with the convening of a Conference of States’ Parties, as provided for by Article 12 of the Treaty, and of the AU Non-Aggression and Common Defence Pact, which came into force on 18 December 2009, as well as the meeting of African Ministers in charge of Border Issues, to be held in Cairo, Egypt, towards the end of March 2010.

18. The Year of Peace and Security will also be marked by renewed efforts to enhance the mediation capacity of the AU and its relevant structures. Among others, this effort will involve providing regular training in mediation, establishing a roster of potential envoys and technical mediation experts, establishing effective systems of communication, information-sharing and decision-making among partner organizations in the field and between their respective headquarters and field operations, and convening regular lessons learned workshops in mediation experiences undertaken by the AU, the United Nations, and various other actors in Africa.

19. The follow-up and the implementation of relevant AU decisions on conflict situations, in particular the Plan of Action adopted in Tripoli
[SP/ASSEMBLY/PS/PLAN(I)], will also feature prominently in the activities of the Year of Peace and Security. The Plan of Action outlines the concrete steps that need to be taken to facilitate the resolution of existing conflicts and crises and the consolidation of peace where it has been achieved. Particular attention will also be paid to the issue of unconstitutional changes of Government, in light of the decisions expected from the AU Policy Organs during the next Ordinary Session of the Assembly, and election-related conflicts and violence, as a follow-up to the recommendations made by the Panel of the Wise and endorsed by the Assembly, in Sirte, in July 2009. Equally, the Commission will seize the opportunity of the Year of Peace and Security to highlight the work currently being done by the Panel of the Wise on the issue of impunity, justice and reconciliation. The final report of the Panel on this issue is expected to be submitted to the Assembly in June / July 2010, for consideration.

20. The Commission intends to invest extra-efforts to communicate on these activities/ events by ensuring effective media coverage and by means of the production of communication support materials.

b) New activities

21. In addition to those activities already planned, there shall be new specific ones to the programme. These will be symbolic and outreach activities aimed at communicating and mobilizing the African public throughout the Year, and substantive activities that consist in actions aimed at producing more tangible results on the ground.

22. As part of the symbolic, outreach activities, the Commission has, among others, planned the following:

(i) Flame of Peace: This is to be launched in January/February, and will travel to all 53 capitals, returning to Addis in January 2011 during the Summit. To the greatest extent possible, steps will be taken for the Flame to arrive in Member States during an event of some significance, including World Cup in South Africa, national days, and other days of national commemoration. I encourage Member states to ensure that the Flame travels outside the capital city, especially into those places which have a history of conflict. In support of the Flame of Peace, we shall commission a documentary film that will record the journey of the Flame, as well as the continent’s historic and ongoing search for peace.

(ii) Appointment of Ambassadors of Peace and establishment of a High-Level Advisory Council: I am in the process of appointing one Patron and twelve Ambassadors of peace, to support this effort. Drawing from national figures, sporting heroes, cultural icons, musicians, writers and artists, we will be enrolling the most prominent Africans, from the continent and the diaspora, in giving publicity and visibility to our collective efforts in search of peace and stability. The High-Level Advisory Council will be a consultative body that would assist the Commission throughout 2010, to facilitate the mobilization of the required
resources and political support. It will include former Heads of State, Nobel Prize Laureates and other personalities.

(iii) **Additional outreach initiatives:** Some of the additional initiatives being envisaged include the following: ‘Stamps for Peace’, special awards at the continent’s leading film festivals, messages for peace on the media outlets, ‘designing peace’ competitions for artists, and silence for peace, to commemorate all those who have lost their lives in the armed conflicts across Africa. The Commission will also encourage scholarships and prizes, conferences and publications, to promote peace, and work with the media, with airlines and telecommunications companies, to find ways in which the messages of peace and security can better be transmitted, to reach ever-wider audiences, and to gain ever-deeper support.

(iv) **Involvement of those affected by armed conflict:** Steps will also be taken to provide a platform and a profile for those most affected by armed conflict. Refugees, IDPs and returnees constitute one of the most important constituencies for peace. Those specialized international agencies that provide humanitarian assistance to these stricken people will be encouraged to find ways to give a voice to those people who have suffered most from conflict. Other groups whose voices need to be heard include those left physically or mentally handicapped by war, including the victims of landmines, the widows and orphans of those killed in conflict, and the veterans of wars themselves.

At the AU Commission itself, we shall be organizing a commemorative event in honour of African peacekeepers, especially those who have fallen in the line of duty while serving the African Union. This event will inaugurate a permanent monument to our peacekeeping forces. The Commission will also initiate steps to build a permanent memorial to the victims of human rights violations, including genocide, within the African Union headquarters.

(v) **Mobilizing African music talents:** The AU Commission will be organizing concerts across our continent to celebrate the Year of Peace and Security, bringing together the cream of the African musical talent.

23. Among the substantive activities that are being planned, the Commission intends to focus on the following:

(i) **Implementation of existing commitments:** First, efforts will be intensified to speed up the implementation of the existing solemn commitments by Member States on peace and security issues. As indicated above, and consistent with the spirit and letter of the Constitutive Act, the Member States have, over the years, adopted a number of instruments on human rights, governance, democracy, disarmament, terrorism, and good neighbourliness, which between them represents a consolidated framework of norms and principles, whose observance will reduce considerably the risk of conflict and violence on the continent and consolidate peace where it has been achieved.
In the Tripoli Declaration, the Heads of State and Government undertook to make renewed efforts to address the root causes of conflicts in a holistic and systematic manner, including through implementing existing relevant instruments. They underlined that this requires that all Member States that have not yet done so speedily to sign and/or ratify those instruments and that the Commission actively monitor their implementation. As requested in the Tripoli Declaration, the Commission will take all necessary steps to sensitize the Member States concerned and to undertake a thorough and systematic review of the status of ratification and implementation of these instruments, with the view of submitting to the Assembly concrete proposals on how to improve compliance.

In a complementary manner, efforts will be made to ensure that African civil society organizations and citizens are fully kept informed of progress made and challenges encountered in the field of peace and security. It is well-established that reliable and timely information in the hands of informed citizens contributes to enhancing accountability. The Commission, therefore, will institute, during this year, the first annual publication of The State of Peace and Security in Africa, as a way of measuring the progress in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts.

(ii) **Role of the Peace and Security Council**: The PSC has become more active than ever before in responding to and managing armed conflicts, and the threat of armed conflicts, across the continent. The recent PSC visit to Sudan was an important precedent in bringing the activities of the PSC closer to one situation of which they are actively seized. During the coming year, it is proposed that the PSC should hold meetings in the countries of concern, along with making further visits to the field, so that PSC members can observe at first hand the realities of these countries. In addition, it is important that the PSC becomes both more proactive in considering situations of potential and incipient conflict, and be also more consistently engaged in countries that are emerging from conflict and which should not be neglected. Progress made in countries such as Liberia and Sierra Leone in putting the conflicts of the past behind them should not lead us to complacency. We must continue to attend to these countries, not least to learn the lessons of the past so as to apply them to the more urgent crises that confront us today.

(iii) **Mobilization of further resources from within the continent in support of peace efforts**: As part of the Year of Peace and Security, efforts will also be made towards a greater financial contribution by AU Member States to the Peace Fund, for Africa to truly own the ongoing efforts to promote peace, security and stability on the continent. In this respect, the decision to increase the statutory transfer from the AU regular budget to the Peace Fund from 6 to 12%, taken in Tripoli, last August, is an encouraging step. However, more needs to be done, and I intend to put forward a number of proposals in the comprehensive report the Tripoli
Declaration requested me to submit to the Assembly in June 2010 on how best to mobilize increased resources from within the continent to support our peace efforts.

(iv) Enhancing the capacity of African Universities and research institutions in the area of peace and security and promoting African solutions: In the Tripoli Declaration, the Heads of State and Government recognized that making and sustaining peace and security was also an intellectual challenge. Therefore, they undertook to build the capacity of African universities and research institutes to explore the nature of African conflicts, to investigate what succeeds and what fails in conflict resolution efforts, and to arrive at African-centered solutions, drawing from Africa’s own distinctive and unique experience.

As a follow-up, and as part of the Year of Peace and Security, the Commission will initiate the necessary steps to help building the scholarly capacity on peace and security in a way commensurate with the needs on the ground. In this respect, efforts will initially focus on establishing a network of researchers, practically-oriented and closely linked to practitioners, in a manner that meets both our immediate needs and our longer-term strategic requirements.

Efforts will also be exerted towards making ‘African solutions’ into a rigorous project rather than a slogan only. At the root of these is a consultative methodology that involves a systematic process of engaging with the affected populations in a conflict-affected country, and drawing upon their analysis and proposals. The African Union High-Level Panel on Darfur (AUPD), chaired by former President Thabo Mbeki and involving former Presidents Abdusalami Abubakar and Pierre Buyoya, has demonstrated the value and efficacy of such a method and strategy. This approach began with the twin premises that the true experts of any conflict are the people who are enduring it, and that any workable and lasting solution must draw upon the experiences and aspirations of the people, and be owned by the people. Without such a participatory approach, any amount of expertise will have little traction on reality. The positive experience of the AUPD can be valuably built upon and replicated elsewhere.

24. While the Commission plans to implement a number of activities, it is crucial that Member States and RECs seize the opportunity of the Year of Peace and Security to highlight what they are doing in promoting peace and security and intensify their efforts in this regard, including launching new initiatives where required, in response to the challenges confronting them and the opportunities that present themselves. Member States can also contribute in many other ways to the success of the Year of Peace and Security, in particular by committing financial resources to the campaign, issuing special stamps, providing free air time and space for advertisements in state media and, as indicated above, taking the necessary steps for the successful touring of the Flame of Peace.
25. Other African institutions, private corporations, media owners and civil society organizations will also be encouraged to take initiatives within the framework of the Year of Peace and Security and integrate them into their ongoing activities, using their own creativity. The Commission intends to engage all concerned to secure their active involvement and mobilize their support.

C) Thematic Focus

26. The Commission intends to seize the opportunity of the Year of Peace and Security to draw attention to the theme of “Women, Youth and Peace”, building on relevant AU instruments and decisions. That women and young people are prominent among the victims of armed conflict hardly needs to be overemphasized. Few of the wars in Africa are fought between conventional armies in which the majority of casualties are combatants. It is far more common for conflicts to be irregular wars in which a large proportion of the victims of violence are the civilian population, including women and children. Among those who fight, the majority are young men. They too bear the brunt of violence - those who survive are scarred physically and emotionally, and are often left without educational qualifications, ill-prepared for a productive peacetime livelihood.

27. Perhaps most importantly, however, a focus on women and young people brings into sharp focus the wider human security dimensions of the peace and security agenda. Conflict in Africa cannot be dissociated from the challenges of reducing poverty, and promoting health, development and education, especially in post-conflict situations. For instance, gainful employment for young people, including former combatants, is a sine qua non for a sustainable recovery from conflict.

D) Communication plan

28. The successful implementation of the Year of Peace and Security will require an effective communication and outreach strategy. The strategy will be designed to generate tangible response from all stakeholders, through strong calls for action. Steps will be taken to provide the different stakeholders with messages and tools they can customize to suit their particular needs. A critical pillar of the communication campaign will be to build links between official efforts at peace and security with those undertaken at grassroots levels. Building such connections will go a long way in mobilizing broad-based support for the Make Peace Happen campaign objectives.

29. Among others, the communication campaign will include engaging celebrities to advocate the objectives of the Year of Peace and Security; developing a distinctive brand identity in order to enable people to connect with the initiative; engaging the media to ensure wide spread dissemination of the activities to be undertaken; developing a website as a portal for people to access information on peace and security issues; preparing citizen advocacy tool kits to inspire and empower individuals and groups to run their own programme, and to link these to the Year of Peace and Security; and producing a Year of Peace and Security documentary. In this respect, the Commission intends to broker a number of partnerships with the public and private sector organizations and to take advantage of a number of
important events in the course of 2010 to popularize the Year of Peace and Security and its objectives, including the FIFA World Cup in South Africa.

30. Integral to our communications campaign will be a concerted effort by the African Union, in close coordination with partners across the continent, to tell the story of Africa’s efforts towards achieving peace and security since the foundation of the Union in 2002. Unfortunately, it has been the norm for Africa’s story, including both our tragedies and our triumphs, to be told by others. It is time for Africa to narrate its own history, so that Africans and African institutions can claim credit where it is due, and can learn the correct lessons and apply them appropriately. The starting point for African solutions and African-led efforts towards solutions is the ownership of the problems that comes from having ourselves correctly researched, analyzed and described our own histories. The next, critical step is an appraisal of our track record in seeking solutions. There are major successes, of which we can justifiably be proud. There are also shortcomings, which we must assess frankly, so as to ensure that we perform better in future. The Commission will therefore be establishing partnerships with African academic institutions and civil society, in order to recount the journey that the AU has undertaken in the last eight years. This, we anticipate, will ensure that people across Africa can better understand the role and promise of the African Union, and will enable us better to pursue our common goals of peace and security.

IV. OBSERVATIONS

31. The Year of Peace and Security will be an opportunity to intensify our efforts towards ridding the continent of the scourge of conflicts and war, building on our achievements and acknowledging our shortcomings. In particular, renewed efforts are required to ensure the full operationalization of the APSA, to address the root causes of conflicts in a holistic and systematic manner, to utilize systematically all available peaceful means to settle disputes, and to push forward the agenda of conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction. No effort should be spared for this initiative to be a successful one, for without an environment of peace, security and stability, our vision of the political and economic integration of Africa will not materialize.

32. In the next twelve months, seventeen African countries will be celebrating their fiftieth anniversaries as independent states. These celebrations should mark a new beginning, heralding a new era for the continent. At the centre of the agenda for renewal must be the challenge of peace and security. More specifically, the African countries concerned should avail themselves of the opportunity for an in-depth reflection on their journey since their independence, in 1960. They should look at both their achievements and shortcomings, with a view to draw lessons on how best to pursue the agenda of freedom and well-being in all its aspects that inspired the broad based struggle against colonialism. Undoubtedly, such lessons will also be useful for other African countries and for the continent as a whole as it strives to translate into reality the strategic objectives the AU has set for itself, especially as they relate to peace, good governance, democracy, human rights, development and integration.
33. The Year of Peace and Security should also provide an opportunity to fully acknowledge the role of civil society and grassroots organizations in the promotion of peace and security. Time and again, African communities owe their survival, and such prosperity and security as they have achieved, to the efforts of community-based organizations. Families, faith-based organizations, grassroots initiatives and civil society have made an outstanding contribution to preserve the fundamental social values and practices that have held Africa together. Even while African states have been in competition and conflict with one another, African communities have been generous and hospitable to refugees and civil society organizations have vigorously stepped into the breach. Significantly, the Tripoli Declaration called on the African civil society to continue to play its role in promoting peace, security and stability as partners of Government, in line with the Constitutive Act.

34. As a follow-up to the Tripoli Declaration, the Commission has sent communications to Member States to inform them of the activities being contemplated for the Year of Peace and Security. More specifically, the Commission stressed that the success of the Year of Peace and Security would require the active involvement of all Member States, which are expected to initiate activities at national level. In this respect, Member States were encouraged to identify specific activities they may wish to undertake and to provide the Commission as detailed information as possible on the steps taken in this respect.

35. The Commission has also seized the opportunity of the annual meeting between the Chief Executives of the AU and the RECs, held in Akosombo, Ghana, on 10 and 11 December 2009, to initiate an exchange on how best the RECs could contribute to the Year of Peace and Security. The meeting underlined the need for the AU and the RECs to work closely to implement activities to mark the Year of Peace and Security. To this end, the meeting welcomed the plans by ECOWAS to organize an international conference on Two Decades of Peace Processes in West Africa, in March 2010, and other initiatives planned by the RECs.

36. As indicated above, making and sustaining peace and security in Africa is also an intellectual challenge and requires efforts to build the capacity of African universities and research institutes. Taking up this challenge, the Commission has, jointly with the Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS) of the Addis Ababa University, embarked on a project aimed at bringing together a number of academic institutions on the continent to provide advance training and undertake applied research in the area of peace and security, with the view to strengthening the capacity of the AU, the RECs and other relevant stakeholders in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts.

37. It goes without saying that sport has a key role to play in furthering the objectives of the Year of Peace and Security, in particular in promoting understanding among people, developing positive attitudes among the youth and encouraging healthy competition and the spirit of fair play. It is against this background, and bearing in mind that through the game of football, which remains the most popular game in Africa and the rest of the world, the Confederation of African Football (CAF) can make an invaluable contribution to our common objectives of an African continent free from conflicts, that I wrote to Mr. Issa Hayatou, President of CAF, to request the involvement and contribution of CAF to the Year of Peace and Security.
In particular, I requested that CAF look at the possibility of organizing specific activities during the African Cup of Nations, in Angola, in January 2010, and other events, as well as to assist us in working out similar arrangements with FIFA during the World Cup in South Africa in 2010.

38. Subsequently, on 9 December 2009, the CAF convened a meeting with officials from the Commission in Cairo, to look at actions that could jointly be undertaken, including using the opportunity of the African Cup of Nations to deliver specific messages on peace and security, the organization of a football tournament in support of the Year of Peace and Security, the launching of a solidarity campaign to be called “White Card” which would be wielded by soccer fans and players to show their support for peace and security. I am also pleased to report that Mr. Hayatou has, on 10 December 2009, written to Mr. Joseph S. Blatter, the President of FIFA, to request him to use the opportunity of the World Cup in South Africa, to initiate actions in support of the Year of Peace and Security. I would like to seize this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to Mr. Hayatou for his support and dedication. The Commission is working with CAF to follow-up on the conclusions reached during the Cairo meeting.

39. Africa is fortunate in that it does not face the challenges of peace and security alone. We have strong and sympathetic partners from all parts of the globe. The Commission shall, therefore, draw upon the existing international partnerships to mobilize the required support for the Year of Peace and Security. In this respect, the Commission will, over the coming weeks, intensify its interaction with the AU partners. In the meantime, I would like to indicate that the German Government, through GTZ, has agreed to provide substantial financial assistance to support the implementation of the activities planned as part of the Year of Peace and Security. I would like to thank the German Government for this generous support, which is a further testimony of its commitment to assist the AU in the implementation of its peace and security agenda. UNICEF has also expressed willingness to collaborate with the AU towards the successful implementation of the Year of Peace and Security.

40. In a year’s time, when we meet again to conclude Africa’s Year of Peace and Security, we must measure our progress, not just in the symbolic activities undertaken and the diplomatic milestones reached, but also in the tangible improvement in peace and security, in the everyday lives of one billion citizens of Africa.