PRESS RELEASE

Africa Union Commissioner for Peace and Security, Ambassador Smaïl Chergui, Congratulates the Government and People of Zambia for successfully hosting the Retreat of the Peace and Security Council in Lusaka

Addis Ababa, 12 November 2016: The Commissioner for Peace and Security, Ambassador Smail Chergui, congratulates the Government and people of the Republic of Zambia for successfully hosting the Retreat of the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC) in Lusaka, from 7 – 9 November 2016. The Commissioner specifically expresses his sincere appreciation and praise to the President of Zambia, H.E. Mr. Edgar Chagwa Lungu, for opening the Retreat and interacting with participants, thereby providing his wise counsel on peace and security issues in Africa, and also for inviting the PSC members for a further interactive session at State House, Lusaka on 8 November 2016. The Commissioner further appreciates the commitment given to the PSC by the President, to champion the implementation of the Master Roadmap on Practical Steps to Silence the Guns in Africa by 2020, which was a key outcome of the Retreat.

The Commissioner wishes to recall that Silencing the Guns by 2020 is a key priority for the first ten-year implementation plan of the AU’s Agenda 2063, and therefore expresses appreciation to the PSC for seizing the opportunity of the Retreat to elaborate practical steps that can be taken by all stakeholders to achieve this onerous task. Indeed, the Retreat comes at a critical juncture when Africa and its people are deploying strenuous efforts to eradicate the root causes of conflict, combat terrorism and violent extremism, against the backdrop of other peace and security challenges such as the continued illicit inflow of small arms and light weapons into Africa, drug and human trafficking, piracy and climate change among others.

The Commissioner further thanks all those who contributed to making the Retreat a success, including the representatives of the Regional Economic Communities, Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, the Committee on Intelligence and Security Services of Africa (CISSA) and the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC). The implementation of the practical steps elaborated in the Master Roadmap by all stakeholders will indeed ensure that the continent achieves AU Agenda 2063’s aspiration for “A Peaceful and Secure Africa.”

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