PRESS RELEASE


Addis Ababa, 4 December 2012: The Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union (AU), Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, met today with the representatives of the member countries of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) in Addis Ababa, to exchange views on the situation in Mali, ahead of the planned UNSC meeting of 5 December 2012, in New York, that will discuss the report submitted by the Secretary-General in pursuance of paragraph 7 of resolution 2071 (2012) of 12 October 2012.

The Chairperson of the Commission took the opportunity to reiterate Africa’s deep concern at the prevailing situation in the northern part of Mali and its consequences for regional and international security and stability. She recalled the ECOWAS and AU two-pronged approach, as provided for in the Strategic Concept for the Resolution of the Crises in Mali endorsed by the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) on 13 November 2012, namely: encouraging dialogue with Malian groups willing to negotiate within the strict framework of the principles articulated by the AU, working towards the early deployment of an operation to assist Mali in restoring its unity and territorial integrity and dismantling the terrorist and other criminal networks active in the northern part of the country.

In this context, the Chairperson of the Commission stressed the urgent need for the UNSC to authorize the deployment of the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA), as provided for in the harmonized Concept of Operations adopted by the PSC, on 13 November 2012. She reiterated the AU’s urgent appeal to the UNSC to extend the required support to AFISMA, in particular the establishment of a UN support package funded through assessed contributions. Underlining that the political and military tracks are mutually reinforcing, the Chairperson of the Commission stated that an early and positive response by the UNSC to the requests made by ECOWAS and the AU would send a clear and strong message on the resolve of the international community, as well as contribute to the early resolution of the crisis.

The introductory remarks of the Chairperson of the Commission were followed by an exchange of views on the prevailing situation in Mali. Participants agreed on the critical importance of continued consultations and coordination among all concerned and sustained efforts to address the various aspects of the crisis. The members of the Security Council expressed their appreciation to the Chairperson for taking the initiative to convene this meeting on the eve of the planned UNSC deliberations on Mali.