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

1. The present report is submitted in pursuance of paragraph 14 of decision Assembly/AU/Dec.275(XVI) on the Year of Peace and Security (YoPS) in Africa. In that decision, the Assembly, at its 14th Ordinary Session held in Addis Ababa from 31 January to 2 February 2010, requested that I submit to its next Ordinary Session, in July 2010, a progress report on the implementation of the YoPS.

2. The report revolves around the strategy for the implementation of the YoPS, the communication and outreach activities undertaken during the period under review, as well as the programmatic aspects of the campaign. It also highlights the contribution of various stakeholders and the partnerships that have been developed. The report concludes with observations on the achievements made so far and the many challenges that lie ahead, with particular emphasis on the need for greater mobilization and ownership of the YoPS programme by Member States.

II. BACKGROUND AND STRATEGY FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE YEAR OF PEACE AND SECURITY

3. As the Assembly will recall, the decision to proclaim 2010 as the YoPS was taken by the Special Session on the Consideration and Resolution of Conflicts in Africa held in Tripoli, Libya, on 31st August 2009. This decision was made against the backdrop of the continued prevalence of armed conflicts in the continent, despite the significant progress made towards the promotion of peace, security and stability. Notably, in paragraph 9 of the Tripoli Declaration, the Heads of State and Government made the following undertaking: “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”.

4. At the 14th Ordinary Session of the Assembly, I submitted a report on the Year of Peace and Security in Africa [Document Assembly/AU/5(XIV)]. In that report, I outlined the key elements of the YoPS, indicating that, while the challenge of achieving peace, security and stability across the entire African continent is clearly an undertaking of many years, the YoPS nonetheless offers us a unique opportunity to give further impetus to the efforts aimed at ending conflicts and sustaining peace. I indicated that the activities to be implemented would consist of existing elements of the AU programme budget for the year 2010 – some of which were underway when the report was submitted, as well as of additional undertakings. As indicated in January, the overarching message for all the activities and the advocacy programme is, quite simply, “Make Peace Happen”. This message highlights the need to mobilize all stakeholders in order for them to take ownership of this initiative and to commit to actions that will make possible the achievement of peace.
5. In concluding my report, I stressed that in a year’s time (January 2011), when the Assembly meets again to review Africa’s Year of Peace and Security, the continent must measure its progress not just in the symbolic activities undertaken and the diplomatic milestones reached, but also in the tangible improvements, in terms of peace and security, in the everyday lives of one billion citizens of Africa.

6. On its part, the Assembly adopted decision Assembly/AU/Dec.275(XVI) in which it expressed full support for the initiatives envisaged as contained in my report, and commended the Commission for the steps already taken towards the implementation of the YoPS. The Assembly further stressed the crucial role to be played by relevant AU structures, Member States and RECs, as well as civil society, in ensuring the achievement of the objectives of the YoPS. The Assembly also appealed to all AU partners to extend the necessary support.

7. Immediately after the Summit, the Commission initiated the necessary follow-up steps. In particular, emphasis was placed on the need to articulate an overall strategy to guide the implementation of the YoPS and the Assembly’s decision. Some of these steps included the recruitment of a strategic communications consultancy to support the development and implementation of the YoPS programme, as well as to enhance the capacity of the Commission; the development of detailed YoPS communication and programmatic strategies and activities; and the engagement of key stakeholders and partners to support the implementation of the YoPS.

8. On the basis of the foregoing, I wrote, on 16 April 2010, to all Heads of State and Government of the AU Member States to reiterate the importance of the decisions made in Tripoli and Addis Ababa and to bring to their attention the steps taken by the Commission in furtherance of the objectives of the YoPS. I encouraged Member States to nominate focal points tasked with the coordination of the YoPS activities nationally, with other regions, as well as with the Commission. I also wrote a similar letter to the Chief Executives of the RECs, stressing the important contribution expected of them. I transmitted to the Heads of State and Government, as well as to the Chief Executives of the RECs, an *Aide-Mémoire on the Year of Peace and Security in Africa*, which provides a summary of the core objectives, principles and approach of the campaign.

9. From the onset, the Commission conceived the YoPS programme as requiring a Commission-wide approach, based on the involvement of all the relevant Departments, working as a cohesive unit to achieve a common goal. In addition, it was understood that the programme would require the input and participation of the AU Regional Offices and Missions on the ground. In this regard, briefings were organised for all the Commissioners, and I also sent a communication to all AU Offices and Specialized Institutions, requesting them to take concrete action in support of peace in 2010 and beyond.

10. In my January report to the Assembly, I indicated that I intended to put in place a High Level Advisory Council that would assist the Commission throughout 2010, to facilitate the mobilization of the required resources and political support. I have since approached a number of African personalities, some of whom have already confirmed their availability. I have also taken steps for the appointment of Peace Ambassadors, drawing from national figures, sport heroes, cultural icons,
writers and artists, with a view to galvanising popular support and mobilising additional resources. The appointment process for both the members of the Advisory Council and the Peace Ambassadors is ongoing, alongside the elaboration of a programme of activities for these personalities.

III. COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

11. The successful implementation of the Year of Peace and Security requires an effective communication and outreach strategy. The strategy, which was developed following extensive work, has been designed to generate tangible responses from all stakeholders, through strong calls for action, and to provide them with messages and tools that they can customize to suit their particular needs.

12. During the period under review, a number of steps have been taken to implement the communication and outreach strategy. Of particular significance in this regard is the Flame of Peace. It is to be recalled that the Flame of Peace was presented to all Heads of State and Government during the January Summit. The Flame of Peace has become a core activity for the commemoration of the Year of Peace and Security by Member States. A number of Member States have undertaken activities around the Flame of Peace, either on their national anniversaries or on Africa Day. The following countries have formally informed the Commission of their efforts and, in some cases, invited it to participate and support:

i) on 17 April, in Bujumbura, Burundi, on the occasion of a ceremony organised by the East African Community (EAC) to commemorate the YoPS, the Commissioner for Peace and Security, Ramtane Lamamra, handed over the Flame of Peace to the First Vice President of Burundi, Dr. Yves Sahinguvu;

ii) on 19 April, Swaziland hosted a Flame of Peace ceremony, at the King’s royal residence in Ebuhleni, alongside the celebrations for King Mswati III’s birthday, which I had the privilege to attend;

iii) on 18 May, Cameroon hosted, in Yaoundé, a Flame of Peace ceremony as part of its 50th independence celebrations, in which I participated. I seized the occasion to present the Flame of Peace to President Paul Biya;

iv) on 23 May, in Accra, Ghana, a ceremony was organised, during which the Deputy Chairperson of the Commission, Erastus Mwencha, presented the Flame of Peace to President John Atta Mills. This ceremony was organised alongside a colloquium marking the culmination of the commemoration of the 100th Birthday Anniversary of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah;

v) on 25 May, I attended the Africa Day celebrations in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, during which I presented the Flame of Peace to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Burkina Faso. The Government has designed a national tour for the Flame of Peace which will conclude with the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of Burkina Faso’s independence, on 11 December in Bobo Diloulasso;
vi) on 25 May, Angola held a Flame of Peace ceremony alongside the Africa Day celebrations in Luanda. The Commissioner for Peace and Security attended the ceremony, handing over the Flame of Peace to the Speaker of the National Assembly, António Paulo Kassoma;

vii) also on 25 May, Tunisia organised a televised debate on the YoPS, with the participation of the Commissioner for Human Resources, Science and Technology, Jean-Pierre Ezin; and

viii) on 29 May, in Ekurhuleni, South Africa, as part of the Africa Day celebrations in South Africa, the Commissioner for Social Affairs, Bience Gawanas, handed over the Flame of Peace to the South African Minister of Arts and Culture.

13. The media have reported Flame of Peace celebrations in other Member States. The Commission looks forward to receiving formal notification from the countries concerned, to enable it to make the necessary updates and provide a more comprehensive picture of the YoPS implementation process.

14. Other outreach initiatives include the following:

i) **Make Peace Happen website and social media campaign:** The Commission has developed a Make Peace Happen website ([www.makepeacethappen.net](http://www.makepeacethappen.net)) in two phases. The initial phase was for basic information dissemination on the YoPS. This was to ensure that there were no information gaps while the main website was being developed. The main Make Peace Happen website is now functional and serves as the face of the campaign. The website is an interactive platform through which the AU and various stakeholders are able to engage on YoPS-related initiatives.

ii) **Make Peace Happen Industry Charter:** One of the guiding principles of the YoPS is inclusivity. In this respect, and as part of the efforts to open up spaces for all stakeholders and deepen partnerships with the private sector, the Commission has developed a **Make Peace Happen Industry Charter**. The Charter acknowledges that businesses can contribute to the promotion of peace in Africa, and aims to enlist their support, bearing in mind that without peace there can be no sustainable economic development. The Commission has reached out to various Business Membership Organisations to urge them to honour the Year of Peace and Security by signing the **Make Peace Happen Industry Charter** and encouraging their member companies to do the same.

Specific efforts have also been made to reach out to airlines and mobile companies, given the specific contribution they can make to spread the message of the Year of Peace and Security. The Commissioner for Peace and Security has formally invited these companies to contribute to the implementation of the YoPS. For example, telecommunications companies could, among other things, carry peace messages, including through SMS, prior to and on Peace Day, while airline companies could
provide transport for members of peace missions and publicity opportunities for the YoPS, particularly in their in-flight magazines. The Commission will follow up with these companies and looks forward to a positive response from them. Indeed, the private sector will benefit immensely from a peaceful environment in Africa, and should therefore take up the challenge to participate in this worthwhile endeavour.

iii) Furthermore, on the occasion of Africa Day, the Commission convened a Seminar in Addis Ababa around this year’s Africa Day theme “Building and Maintaining Peace and Security through Sports”. This Seminar was attended by Member States, representatives of the Confederation of African Football (CAF) and the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD), as well as other AU partners. The event, which was chaired by the Commissioner for Political Affairs, Julia Dolly Joiner, was premised on the recognition of the critical role that sport plays in peace-building: indeed, through sport, children, women and men share a common language and a spirit of fair play that transcends the divisions and despair that are the consequences of conflict.

The Commission utilised the opportunity to launch a project known as the “Peace Caravan”, which is an expedition across close to 30 countries in Africa, with the aim of creating awareness and spreading the message of peace amongst African citizens. The “Peace Caravan” is an initiative by an NGO known as Peace Journey in Africa 2000 Promotion. Given the relevance of this initiative to the 2010 Year of Peace and Security, the Commission granted the NGO US$ 30,000 in support of this project. I call upon all countries that will be visited by the “Peace Caravan” to extend the necessary support and visibility.

iv) On the ground, AU Liaison Offices and Missions undertook a variety of activities on Africa Day to celebrate the YoPS, including through workshops, sporting events and other activities. It is worth noting the initiatives undertaken by the AU Offices in Burundi, Liberia, Sudan, Western Sahara, as well as by our Permanent Missions in Geneva and New York, in collaboration with partner organisations, including the United Nations. The New York event was attended by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who highlighted the importance of the AU-UN partnership in tackling conflict on the Continent.

IV. PEACE DAY

15. As the Assembly is aware, so as to engage all partners at political, institutional, civil society and community levels, and to encourage all citizens to play a part in making peace happen, the Year of Peace and Security in Africa campaign will culminate on one day, the International Day of Peace, on 21 September (Peace Day). Established by a UN resolution, Peace Day provides a single rallying point for our continent to show that peace is possible. On 21 September, there should be no violence, no conflict, no fighting – all Africans should experience peace simultaneously. The cessation of hostilities on this day will make it possible for people, particularly in conflict zones, to receive vital food, water, mosquito nets and other emergency supplies. The achievement of this objective will provide a very
strong impetus for the promotion of lasting peace on the continent. So while Africa has made history by staging the FIFA World Cup in 2010, our continent will make another kind of history by making peace happen for at least a day: 1 billion people, working together to make peace happen.

16. The Peace Day work programme will be multifaceted. While there will be many government, community and stakeholder activities to mark Peace Day, much of the focus for this day will be on two (2) critical elements, namely:

i) cessation of hostilities in all conflict areas which are still experiencing varying levels of violence;

ii) distribution of humanitarian supplies, materials and services to communities in conflict areas, as well as in non-conflict areas in critical need of these.

17. In addition, the following activities are being planned for Peace Day:

i) one minute of silence for peace across Africa at a pre-agreed time;

ii) relevant developmental work and community support in all AU Member States to be carried out by members of the armed and security forces;

iii) *One Day One Goal* football games: these are football games to be played across Africa, to bring communities together around one common goal – peace. The Commission intends to organise these games in collaboration with CAF within the framework of the existing YoPS partnership between the two organisations;

iv) *Make Peace Happen Lesson Plan*: The Commission has developed a Make Peace Happen Lesson Plan for use by schools and colleges. The lesson emphasises the benefits of peace and aims at institutionalising a culture of peace in our communities in Africa.

18. In order to successfully implement the Peace Day programme, the Commission will mobilize all its resources, networks, and partners. Among others, steps are being taken to convene a brainstorming and strategy session involving all Commissioners with a view to facilitating the prioritisation of activities and sharing of tasks. Furthermore, the Commission will organise a meeting bringing together all AU Special Envoys and Representatives/Liaison Offices, as well as those of the partner organisations, to agree on the practical steps to be taken in support of Peace Day. In addition, a planning and strategy session will be convened with all humanitarian and non-governmental organisations active on the ground, as well as those at the global level involved in delivering similar programmes. Finally, the Commission will convene a Forum of Civil Society, bringing together the main African think tanks and NGOs working on peace issues, religious organisations, as well as specific organisations active on the ground.

19. However, fundamentally, the success of Peace Day will depend on the active participation of each and every Member State. It is crucial that Member States start preparations in earnest, to mobilise all stakeholders and set up the required
structures to coordinate the activities to be implemented on Peace Day as outlined above. They should use all available resources and opportunities to make this day a success. The Commission will provide Member States with the necessary tools and guidelines.

20. While the 21st of September will be the highlight of the campaign, it is important to keep in mind that the Year of Peace and Security in Africa is not just about one day. It is about mobilizing all stakeholders to commit to actions that make sustainable peace possible. Peace Day will be followed up with a programme of education and awareness-raising to enable ordinary citizens to exchange stories and experiences, for example through the planned Make Peace Happen Awards.

V. PROGRAMMATIC ACTIVITIES

21. The Year of Peace and Security is not only about symbolic and outreach activities. It also includes substantive efforts aimed at ending conflicts and sustaining peace and security. In my January report, I highlighted some of the areas where the Commission intended to invest extra efforts, in order to achieve tangible results on the ground. Among others, these include:

i) **The Tripoli Plan of Action:** In Tripoli, in August 2009, the Assembly adopted a Plan of Action [SP/ASSEMBLY/PS/PLAN(I)] that identified the measures that need to be taken to accelerate the resolution of conflict and crisis situations, as well as consolidate peace where it has been achieved. The Commission has pursued and intensified its efforts towards the implementation of the Tripoli Plan of Action. Particular attention has been devoted to the return of constitutional order in the countries concerned. Progress has been made in Guinea and Niger, while the situation remains stalemated in Madagascar. Sustained efforts are also being made in support of the implementation process of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), which reached a milestone with the holding of general elections last April and will culminate in the self-determination referendum for Southern Sudan in January 2011. Detailed accounts of the efforts being made in this respect are captured in the Report on the Activities of the Commission for the period January – July 2010 submitted to Council, as well as in the Report of the Peace and Security Council on its Activities and the State of Peace and Security in Africa.

ii) **Mediation Capacity:** In my January report, I indicated that 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. I am pleased to report that a number of steps have since been taken in this respect. These include: the provision of regular training in mediation; the ongoing development of a roster of potential envoys and technical mediation experts; the establishment of effective systems of communication, information-sharing and decision-making between the AU and partner organisations; and the convening of regular “lessons learned” workshops on mediation experiences of the AU, the United Nations and other stakeholders.
iii) *The African Standby Force* (ASF): Efforts have continued to be made regarding the operationalisation of the ASF, which is a critical pillar of the African Peace and Security Architecture. Currently, the Commission is fully engaged in the preparations for the meeting of the Specialised Technical Committee for Defence, Security and Safety, that will take place in Addis Ababa in October/November 2010, to review the state of play in the operationalisation of the ASF and determine the way forward. This meeting will be preceded by the AMANI Africa Exercise, which will make it possible to evaluate the operational effectiveness of the ASF. The exercise will be held in Addis Ababa in mid-October 2010.


v) *The AU Non-Aggression and Common Defence Pact*: The Pact, which was adopted in Abuja in January 2005 and entered into force in December 2009, constitutes another key element for the continent’s collective security. Efforts have been initiated for the establishment of the implementation mechanisms provided for by the Pact, including the Commission on International Law (AUCIL). The AUCIL held its first meeting in Addis Ababa in early May 2010, following the adoption of its Statutes by the Assembly in February 2009, during which it prepared its work plan and budgetary proposals. A second meeting will be held shortly to enable the AUCIL to finalise its rules of procedure for subsequent submission to the relevant AU policy organ.

vi) *Combating and Preventing Terrorism*: The 4th meeting of the Focal Points for the African Centre on the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT), which took place in Algiers from 13 to 15 June 2010, in the presence of the Commissioner for Peace and Security, was held under the umbrella of the Year of Peace and Security. The meeting provided an opportunity to review on-going efforts to combat terrorism and enhance Africa’s contribution in that regard.

vii) *Meeting of African Ministers in Charge of Border Issues*: The persistence of border disputes and conflicts constitute a threat to peace and security on the continent. The period under review was marked by the convening of the 2nd Conference of African Ministers in charge of Border Issues, in Addis Ababa, on 25 March 2010, having been preceded by a meeting of Governmental Experts from 22 to 23 March 2010. The Conference adopted a Declaration on the Modalities for the Pursuit and Acceleration of the AU Border Programme (AUBP), which articulates a set of steps to be taken in furtherance of the various components of the AUBP, in particular delimitation/demarcation, cross-border cooperation and capacity building. A report on the proceedings and outcome of the Conference has been submitted to the Executive Council.
viii) **Signing and Ratification of the African Charter on Elections, Democracy and Governance:** 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 relevant existing instruments. They underlined that this requires that all Member States that have not yet done so speedily sign and ratify those instruments. The entry into force and effective implementation of the African Charter on Elections, Democracy and Governance will go a long way in furthering democracy and improving governance on the continent, thus contributing to the structural prevention of conflicts. The Commission has undertaken a number of initiatives, including interaction with civil society organizations, to expedite the signing and ratification process of the Charter, with a view to ensuring its entry into force by the end of this year. The Advisory Council and Peace Ambassadors will devote significant efforts to the realization of this objective. To date, 35 Member States have signed the Charter, while only 3 have ratified this instrument.

ix) **Involvement of those Affected by Armed Conflicts:** As indicated in January, the Year of Peace and Security will also feature activities aimed at providing a platform for those most affected by armed conflict. Indeed, refugees, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and returnees, as well as other groups, such as those left physically or mentally handicapped by war, constitute some of the most important constituencies for peace. As a follow-up, the Commission has approached organisations such as the UNHCR, UNICEF and the ICRC, to jointly undertake activities that would facilitate the involvement of those affected by armed conflicts and highlight their contribution. One of the options being explored is the organisation of art competitions between children in refugee and IDP camps on 21st September, to provide them with an avenue through which they can express themselves.

Furthermore, the Commission is working towards the organisation of a commemorative event in honour of African peace keepers, especially those who have fallen in the line of duty, while serving the African people. Consultations will be conducted with a select number of former African force commanders in peace keeping operations, to seek their advice on the most appropriate way to pay tribute to their sacrifice.

The Commission is also working towards the construction, within the African Union headquarters, of a permanent memorial dedicated to the victims of human rights violations, including genocide. The Commission has already initiated a reflection on the forms that such a memorial could take – these could range from the simplest (a public work of art) through an educational or museum function, to an institution with on-going and proactive activities in the field of human rights, drawing from relevant national and international experiences. A consultative meeting is being planned, in the course of September, to exchange ideas and experiences on the different kinds of human rights and genocide memorials, and different forms of governance for such structures.
VI. STAKEHOLDER CONTRIBUTIONS, PARTNERSHIPS AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

22. Delivering a successful, meaningful and high-impact Year of Peace and Security is an undertaking that requires the harmonised involvement of a multiplicity of stakeholders. The aim is to generate a powerful and focused momentum towards peace. It is also about highlighting that peace building is the responsibility of all: states, inter-governmental organisations, communities and individuals. Accordingly, the Commission has endeavoured to facilitate and harness the involvement of a range of stakeholders.

i) Peace and Security Council and Panel of the Wise

23. In its January 2010 decision, the Assembly requested the Peace and Security Council (PSC) to undertake specific activities in support of the Year of Peace and Security, in particular by holding meetings in countries affected by conflicts, making further visits in the field, so that PSC members can observe at first hand the realities in these countries, and become more proactive in considering situations of potential and incipient conflict, while remaining engaged in countries that are emerging from conflict. The Assembly also requested the PSC to devote special sessions to the theme of Women and Youth in Conflicts.

24. Following the January Summit, the Commission provided a briefing for the PSC members to facilitate the elaboration of their programme of work within the context of the YoPS. Subsequently, the PSC members had an in-depth exchange of views on the activities they could undertake. The proposals made in this respect are being finalized for implementation. Furthermore, the PSC, at its 223rd meeting held on 30 March 2010, deliberated on the situation of women and children in armed conflicts in Africa, concluding with the adoption of a Press Statement which underlined the need for renewed efforts to implement the commitments made by African countries to address the plight of women and children in armed conflicts.

25. The Panel of the Wise has also taken steps to contribute to the Year of Peace and Security. These include the decision of the Panel to focus its thematic reflection for 2010 – 2011 on the issue of Women and Children in Armed Conflicts, in line with the thematic focus of the YoPS. An experts’ workshop on this issue was organised in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo, from 19 to 20 May 2010, followed by the 8th meeting of the Panel, on 21 May, which reviewed the recommendations made by the experts. The Panel will submit its report to the Assembly of the Union in 2011, following further work on the ground that will make it possible to deepen the Panel’s understanding of the issues involved. The Panel took the opportunity of its presence in Kinshasa, to formally present the Flame of Peace to the Congolese Government.

ii) Member States and Regional Economic Communities

26. In its above-mentioned decision, the Assembly underlined the crucial role of Member States and urged them to seize the opportunity of the Year of Peace and Security to highlight their actions in favour of peace and security and to intensify their efforts in this regard. It is within this framework that, as indicated above, I wrote to all Heads of State and Government to urge them to take practical steps in support of the Year of Peace and Security in Africa. As indicated above, some Member States
have taken initiatives in this respect, especially on the occasion of the commemoration of the anniversaries of their independence and on Africa Day.

27. The Commission has also received formal communication from some Member States following my letter of 16 April 2010. On 30 April 2010, President Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal wrote to me to acknowledge my letter and to inform me of the designation of a Focal Point for the Year of Peace and Security. On 1 June 2010, the Permanent Mission of Tunisia to the AU wrote to the Commission to indicate that, following the letter I addressed to President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, steps were being taken to: issue a special stamp on the YoPS; hold an exposition on the importance of peace and security and Tunisia’s contribution to the realization of this objective; organise an event involving the youth and during which a Flame of Peace ceremony will be held; and carry out a sensitisation programme on peace and security in all Tunisian schools on Peace Day. Tunisia has also appointed a focal point for the coordination of the YoPS activities.

28. The Assembly also urged the RECs to play the role expected of them in the implementation of the YoPS. In this respect, I would like to acknowledge the efforts undertaken by some RECs in contributing to the YoPS, namely: the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the East African Community (EAC), and the Common Market of East and Southern Africa (COMESA).

29. In March 2010, ECOWAS organised a Conference in Monrovia, Liberia, celebrating “Two Decades of Peace Processes in West Africa: 1989 – 2009”. This Conference, which was held with the support of the Commission and attended by the Commissioner for Peace and Security, provided a platform for dialogue and reflection on the achievements made in West Africa and the challenges ahead.

30. On 17 April 2010, the EAC organised, within the framework of the YoPS, an event in Bujumbura, Burundi, culminating in the destruction of 1,000 illicit small arms and light weapons, which was attended by the Commissioner for Peace and Security. Mention should also be made of the ceremony that took place in Bukoba, Tanzania, on Africa Day, during which instruments of violence were destroyed and the efforts by Tanzania to naturalise 162,000 refugees from Burundi were celebrated. I conveyed a message of support to the EAC and commended its leadership for their commitment and contribution to making peace happen in 2010 and beyond.

31. I would like to thank the Secretary-General of COMESA, who communicated to the Commission a detailed programme of work for the YoPS. The programme highlights a series of activities through which COMESA aims to achieve the objectives of the YoPS, including: a message from the COMESA Secretary-General in the organisation’s website indicating that COMESA is observing the YoPS; reference to the messages of the YoPS during important COMESA meetings and events; installation of a Trade Information Desk at Goma and Gisenyi; a workshop of parliamentarians on War Economies; a football tournament; events around the COMESA Summit and COMESA Day.

32. I commend ECOWAS, EAC and COMESA for the initiatives they have undertaken and encourage them to continue with their efforts. I urge the other RECs
to identify and implement both outreach and substantive activities in support of the YoPS.

iii) Civil Society and Private Sector

33. Some of the principles guiding the Year of Peace and Security activities highlight the need to inspire African peoples to promote peace and security; bring people together in peaceful activities; and showcase success stories and existing efforts by communities and stakeholders. Indeed, the Tripoli Declaration calls, among other things, for the deepening of partnerships with civil society.

34. In this respect, the Commission is working closely with a number of civil society organisations on the implementation of the YoPS. Joint initiatives are being planned with ACCORD, in mobilising civil society for the implementation of YoPS. ACCORD has pledged to help coordinate preparations for the Forum of Civil Society, scheduled to take place later this year. In April, ACCORD organised a peace awards ceremony to recognise the contribution of the President Ernest Bai Koroma and the people of Sierra Leone to the quest for peace. I attended this ceremony, which was presided over by President Jacob Zuma. Furthermore, the Commission and the NGO Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS) have agreed on a number of activities to commemorate the Year of Peace and Security around the theme “Women, Youth and Peace”.

35. As indicated in the Tripoli Declaration, making and sustaining peace and security is also an intellectual challenge. Accordingly, the Heads of State and Government 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-centred solutions, drawing from Africa’s own distinctive and unique experience. It is within this context that the Commission has extended support to the Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS) of the Addis Ababa University, to offer extensive training and undertake research in the field of peace and security. The first course took place in Addis Ababa in the course of May 2010 and brought together participants from the AU, RECs and Governments.

36. Finally, the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) has agreed to partner with the AU Commission, through a variety of outreach efforts to publicise the YoPS. In addition, ISS is working towards the launching of a Peace Academy, which aims to provide expert training at the conceptual and strategic level in African peace and security for mid-career diplomats, military officers, and civil servants from African foreign, defence, and other relevant ministries, as well as from international organisations and non-governmental organizations engaged with African issues. The implementation of this project will go a long way in furthering the objectives of the YoPS and is a significant contribution to the efforts aimed at enhancing the capacity of Africa to meet the challenges of peace, security and stability.

37. As indicated above, the Commission has developed a Make Peace Happen Industry Charter, based on the acknowledgement that businesses can contribute to the promotion of peace in Africa. Efforts are being made for private sector organisations to sign the Charter and make specific contributions towards the YoPS.
In addition, targeted initiatives have been taken to reach out to African airlines and mobile networks to seek their support for the YoPS.

**iv) United Nations and other International Partners**

38. The role that the United Nations plays in peace and security on the African continent is well known. It is, therefore, only logical that we partner with the United Nations in delivering on the YoPS programme. By focusing our attention on Peace Day, we are demonstrating our determination to follow-up on the commitments we have made as members of the United Nations. On 14 May 2010, I addressed a letter to the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, to stress that the close partnership between the United Nations and the African Union provides us with a great opportunity to jointly work together to make peace happen in 2010 and beyond. I sought his personal support and that of the entire United Nations system, to join hands with the AU to undertake activities on the ground, in particular on Peace Day.

39. Subsequently, on 7 June 2010, I wrote to the Chief Executives of the different UN agencies to request them to partner with the AU and other relevant stakeholders to make Peace Day, along with other 2010 Year of Peace and Security activities, a success. I have also written to the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa for his institution to make a contribution to the achievement of the objectives of the YoPS.

40. Furthermore, I have written to the President of the African Development Bank (AfDB), to propose a similar partnership in support of the YoPS. The AfDB can make a meaningful contribution in assisting the AU to elaborate innovative strategies to mobilise substantial resources from within the continent to support peace efforts.

41. I also would like to mention that the Africa-France Summit, held in Nice on 31 May and 1 June 2010, expressed support for the Year of Peace and Security. France pledged to support the action of the AU and the regional organisations in bolstering their collective security mechanisms. On 7 June, and as part of its contribution to the YoPS, the International Organisation of La Francophonie, in collaboration with the Francophone Research Network on Peace Operations (ROP) from the University of Montreal and with the support of Canada, organised a seminar on “Peace Operations in Africa: State of Play, Challenges and Prospects”. The seminar was attended by AU Member States and other stakeholders and provided an opportunity to examine a number of issues linked to peace operations on the African continent.

42. Also relevant to the objectives of the YoPS are the conclusions of the 4th College-to-College meeting between the AU and EU Commissions which took place in Addis Ababa on 8 June 2010. Indeed, the meeting provided an opportunity to review, among others, the Africa-EU partnership in the area of peace and security. In the joint declaration issued at the end of the meeting, the two Commissions agreed to maintain and strengthen their efforts to improve the global management of crisis and address long-term threats to stability peace and security in Africa, Europe and worldwide.

43. That the implementation of the Year of Peace and Security programme of activities requires substantial resources hardly needs to be overemphasised. The Commission has pursued its drive towards resource mobilisation. I would like, once
again, to recognise the German Government’s support through GTZ. GTZ has provided 1 million Euros to support the implementation of the YoPS programme, in addition to its technical assistance and support to other initiatives on the continent, including the EAC event in Bujumbura and the IPSS training course. In the same vein, I would like to acknowledge the support we have so far received from Oxfam International’s Liaison Office in Addis Ababa in the area of communication. I urge other AU partners to come forward and provide the much needed assistance and support.

VII. OBSERVATIONS

44. The Year of Peace and Security offers an unprecedented opportunity to review current efforts towards peace building on the continent, with a view to strengthening them and, where appropriate, launching new initiatives. No effort should be spared to seize this opportunity and bring to an end the conflicts that are tearing our continent apart, undermining our development efforts and inflicting untold and unnecessary suffering on our people. As stressed in the Tripoli Declaration, African leaders “...simply cannot bequeath the burden of conflicts to the next generation of Africans.”

45. Over the past six months, significant progress has been made in the implementation of the 2010 Year of Peace and Security in Africa: the outreach campaign is gaining momentum; space has been opened up and partnerships are being built, to enable the various stakeholders to contribute to the achievement of the objective of a conflict-free Africa; some Member States, RECs and civil society organisations have embraced the call for ownership and are moving forward with concrete initiatives in support of the YoPS. In addition, efforts have been intensified towards the consolidation of the AU normative and institutional framework for addressing the challenges of peace, as well as for the resolution of the existing conflicts and the consolidation of peace where it has been achieved.

46. At the same time, many challenges still lie ahead, which require sustained efforts in order for this initiative to be a resounding success in terms of positive and tangible impact on the lives of ordinary Africans. In so doing, we should not overlook the achievements made, for they provide the foundation on which we should continue to build in order for our vision of a continent at peace with itself and the rest of the world to fully materialise.

47. The adoption of the Tripoli Declaration was a bold demonstration of commitment on the part of African leaders, as well as an acknowledgement of the need to significantly upscale the efforts to address peace and security issues and, indeed to once and for all bring an end to the scourge of conflicts on the continent. Today, Africa is on an ascending trajectory, having recorded, over the past few years, remarkable progress in terms of economic growth, democracy and governance. Maintaining and nurturing peace is critical for the sustenance of these gains and the realisation of the continent’s full potential. Now, more than ever before, action, boldness and resolve are paramount.

48. We are half-way into the Year of Peace and Security. The next six months will be critical in determining the success of the campaign and the achievement of its objectives. I appeal to Member States to fully take ownership of this initiative,
including by signing and ratifying relevant AU instruments and effectively implementing the commitments contained therein, as well as by intensifying their efforts for peace. In addition, Member States can take a number of other practical steps to popularise the campaign in their respective countries, notably through: issuing special stamps, providing free air time and space for advertisements in state media, and facilitating the successful tour of the Flame of Peace. It is equally important that, while we continue to seek the support of our partners, we mobilise increased resources from within the continent, for without such resources there will be no real ownership and leadership in the quest for peace.

49. I urge the African civil society and private sector to join hands with the AU and its Member States to make peace happen in 2010 and beyond. Indeed, to achieve peace between nations and non-violence in our homes, communities and schools requires everyone’s involvement. I challenge every African to take a step of faith and do something to support the Year of Peace and Security, for none of us is too small to make a difference.
“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.” (Paragraph 9 of the Tripoli Declaration of 31 August 2009).