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ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

REPORT OF THE 5TH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE SPECIALIZED TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE, SECURITY AND SAFETY
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA, 23 – 26 OCTOBER 2011
REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMISSION ON THE 5TH ORDINARY MEETING OF THE SPECIALIZED TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE, SECURITY AND SAFETY (STCDSS) OF THE AFRICAN UNION (AU)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its 18th Ordinary Session held in Addis Ababa from 24 to 28 January 2011, the Executive Council endorsed the Declaration of the 4th Ordinary Meeting of the Specialized Technical Committee on Defence, Security and Safety (STCDSS) of the African Union (AU), held on 7 December 2010. It welcomed the outcome of Exercise Amani Africa, held in Addis Ababa, from 13 to 29 October 2010, as well as the Regional Standby Forces Exercises, aimed at testing the ability of the AU and the regions to manage multidimensional missions and at facilitating the efficient deployment of the African Standby Force (ASF), Council requested that a number of follow-up actions be taken [EX.CL/Dec.626(XVIII)].

2. As a follow-up to the Declaration and subsequent Executive Council decision, the STCDSS held its 5th Ordinary Meeting in Addis Ababa, on 26 October 2011, to review the status of operationalisation of the ASF and identified the steps to be taken for the attainment of the objectives set in the relevant AU decisions and policy documents. It was preceded by the 8th meeting of the African Chiefs of Defence Staff and Heads of Security and Safety Services, and a preparatory meeting of experts, from 23 to 25 October 2011.

3. The present report provides an account of the proceedings of the STCDSS meeting and its outcome. It concludes with observations on the way forward.

II. PREPARATORY MEETING OF EXPERTS AND 8TH MEETING OF THE CHIEFS OF DEFENCE STAFF AND HEADS OF SECURITY AND SAFETY SERVICES

4. As indicated above, the STCDSS meeting was preceded by a preparatory meeting of experts, from 23 to 24 October. It was attended by representatives of Member States, as well as those of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs)/Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (RMs), namely the East African Standby Force Coordination Mechanism (EASFCOM), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the North African Regional Capability (NARC) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

5. The meeting considered the status of operationalisation of the ASF, at both the continental and regional levels, on the basis of the Progress Report I submitted[Rpt/Exp/V/STCDSS/(iii)2011 – Rpt/VIII/ADCS/(iii)2011], as well as presentations made by the Commission and the Regional Standby Forces. The discussions centered on Draft ASF Roadmap III, including the Continental Logistic Base (CLB) and Exercise AMANI II. The meeting also discussed other related issues, in particular the role of the ASF in maritime security and safety and the restructuring of the AU Strategic Headquarters.
6. The meeting of the Chiefs of Defence Staff and Heads of Security and Safety Services took place on 25 October 2011, in the presence of the Commissioner for Peace and Security. The meeting exchanged views on the report of the preparatory meeting of experts, and requested that the amendments made be incorporated in the Draft Declaration that was to be submitted to the STCDSS.

III. MEETING OF THE STCDSS

7. The Ministers of Defence and Security and Safety Services met on 26 October 2011. The Commissioner for Peace and Security was in attendance. The meeting provided an opportunity to take stock of the progress made in the establishment of the ASF. In this respect, the Ministers recognised the tremendous efforts made by all concerned towards the development of the ASF, and expressed appreciation to the partners for their continued support. At the same time, the Ministers acknowledged that there was still a long way to go to attain the objective of fully operationalising the ASF. Against this background, they stressed the need for all concerned, at national, regional and continental levels, to intensify the efforts aimed at making the ASF fully operational and to ensure that the continent is adequately equipped to meet the daunting challenges of peace, security and stability.

8. More specifically, on the basis of the Report of the preparatory meeting of experts, as reviewed by the Chiefs of Defence Staff and Heads of Security and Safety Services, the Ministers adopted the attached Declaration (Annex I). The Ministers endorsed Roadmap III for the ASF and outlined the key steps to be taken to ensure the operationalisation of the ASF. The Declaration also addressed a number of other related issues.

9. It should also be noted that the Ministers took advantage of their meeting to attend the launching ceremony of the AMANI AFRICA II, which took place in the afternoon of 26 October 2011. I chaired the ceremony. This new cycle will capitalise on the capacity already built and the lesson learnt from the first AMANI AFRICA cycle to both contribute towards and validate the operational readiness of the ASF by 2015. In particular, AMANI II will aim at reinforcing communication and information flow between the continental and regional levels of the ASF, as well as at streamlining the Regions decision making processes and aligning their procedures with those at the continental level. Whereas the first AMANI AFRICA cycle concluded in a simulation Command Post Exercise (CPE), the new training cycle will go further by conducting a full-fledged Field Training Exercise (FTE), at the end of the cycle.

IV. OBSERVATIONS

10. Since the last meeting of the STCDSS, significant progress has been made in the operationalisation of the ASF. A number of steps have been taken to follow-up on the recommendations of the STCDSS and subsequent decision by the Executive Council. Of particular symbolism is the MoU signed between the Commission and the EASFCOM regarding the deployment of EASFCOM military staff to Somalia. This MoU provided the framework for the first-ever deployment of a Regional Standby Force component.
11. Today more than ever before, there is need for the continent to step up its efforts to ensure the timely operationalisation of the ASF, as this will tremendously enhance the capacity of the AU to meet the daunting challenges that the continent continues to face in the area of peace and security. Roadmap III outlines the steps to be taken to ensure the full operationalisation of the ASF by 2015. It is critical to meet that deadline.

12. While working on the implementation process of Roadmap III, once endorsed, it is equally important to immediately put into action the ASF in specific areas. The proposal to establish a Maritime Information and Coordination Cell is informed by this concern, and the need to take urgent action to enhance maritime security and safety on the continent. Getting the ASF involved in earnest in operational activities will definitely facilitate efforts to mobilise further support for its full operationalisation.

13. Finally, I cannot but emphasize the need to mobilise additional resources from within the continent to support the AU Peace and Security Agenda. This is a *sine qua non* condition for Africa to truly own the peace efforts on the continent. In this respect, I would like to echo the call made by the Extraordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union, held on 25 May, for Member States to make voluntary contributions to the Peace Fund. On its part, the Commission is currently exploring additional sources of financing, as envisaged under the sustainability programme of the Year of Peace and Security, and endorsed by the 15th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union.
DECLARATION
5TH ORDINARY MEETING OF THE
SPECIALIZED TECHNICAL COMMITTEE
ON DEFENCE, SECURITY AND SAFETY

8TH MEETING OF AFRICAN CHIEFS OF
DEFENCE STAFF AND HEADS OF SECURITY
AND SAFETY SERVICES

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA
23 - 26 OCTOBER 2011

Rpt/Exp/V/STCDSS/DECL/2011
Rpt/VIII/ACDS/DECL/2011

DECLARATION
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1. We, the members of the Specialized Technical Committee on Defence, Security and Safety (STCDSS) of the African Union (AU), at our 5th ordinary meeting held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 26 October 2011, reviewed the status of operationalisation of the African Standby Force (ASF) and identified the steps to be taken towards the achievement of the objectives set in the relevant AU decisions and policy documents. Our meeting was preceded by the 8th meeting of the African Chiefs of Defence Staff and Heads of Security and Safety Services and a preparatory meeting of experts, from 23 to 25 October 2011.

2. Our meeting took place against the backdrop of continued conflict on the continent, despite the tremendous strides made towards the promotion of peace, security and stability in Africa. In this respect, we noted the declarations adopted by the 275th meeting of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) and the extraordinary session of the Assembly of the Union, held on 26 April and 25 May 2011, respectively, stressing, amongst others, the need for renewed efforts towards the prevention and resolution of conflicts, as well as peace building.

3. Our deliberations were informed by the decision of the 18th ordinary session of the AU Executive Council, held in Addis Ababa from 24 to 28 January 2011, which endorsed the Declaration of our 4th ordinary meeting held on 7 December 2010, as well as relevant AU decisions relating to the operationalisation of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). Our deliberations were further informed by the imperative to be action oriented by responding to urgent needs on the ground and making use of the existing ASF capabilities to that end.

4. Our meeting afforded us the opportunity to take stock of the progress made in the establishment of the ASF as articulated in the PSC Protocol, on the basis of the progress report submitted by the Chairperson of the Commission [Rpt/Exp/V/STCDSS/(iii)2011 - Rpt/VIII/ACDS/(iii)2011] and the updates provided by the Peace Support Operations Division (PSOD) of the Peace and Security Department (PSD) and the Regional Standby Forces of the Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (RECs/RMs). In this respect, we recognise the tremendous efforts made by all concerned towards the development of the ASF at the regional and continental levels. We additionally express our appreciation to the partners for their support.

5. At the same time, we acknowledge that there is still a long way to go to achieve the objective of fully operationalising the ASF, which is an important component of the APSA. Against this background, we stress the need for all concerned, at national, regional and continental levels, to intensify the efforts aimed at making the ASF fully operational and to ensure that the continent is adequately equipped to meet the daunting challenges of peace, security and stability.

6. In light of the above, and on the basis of the report of the preparatory meeting of experts [Rpt/Exp/V/STCDSS/(vi)2011 – Rpt/VIII/ACDS/(vi)2011] as reviewed by the Chiefs of Defence Staff and Heads of Security and Safety Services, we:
(a) endorse ASF Roadmap III, which covers a period of five (5) years (2011-2015), as elaborated following the consultative meeting held in Douala, Cameroon, from 21 to 23 April 2011, and further reviewed by the experts, as well as by the Chiefs of Defence Staff and Heads of Security and Safety Services, with the amendments made regarding the harmonization of the timeframe for some key activities, the enhancement of coordination with RECs/RMs, including regular consultations with their Planning Elements (PLANELMs), coordination of the participation of African countries in United Nations peacekeeping operations, and the submission by the Commission of regular reports on the implementation process. We urge the AU Commission and the RECs/RMs to spare no efforts in ensuring the timely implementation of the Roadmap to attain Full Operational Capability (FOC) of the ASF by 2015. We undertake to annually assess the implementation of the Roadmap, on the basis of the reports to be submitted by the Commission, so as to ensure its continued relevance and adjust it as necessary. We commend the Government of Cameroon and ECCAS for having hosted the consultative meeting on ASF Roadmap III and for their invaluable support;

(b) welcome the steps taken towards the establishment of the ASF Continental Logistics Base (CLB) in Douala, Cameroon, including the Technical Assessment Missions undertaken by the Commission, the ongoing discussions on the conclusion of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the AU and the Government of Cameroon, and the holding of a contributing conference in July 2011. We welcome the contributions made by the Government of Cameroon and its commitment to the successful implementation of the project. We encourage the Commission to continue with the planned activities to ensure the full operationalisation of the CLB and to make use of available expertise within the continent to that end. In this respect, we request the Commission to undertake wide consultations with all stakeholders, including Member States and RECs/RMs, to clarify the role of the CLB in relation to the regional logistics depots and ensure their cost effectiveness. We further request the Commission to determine as precisely as possible the funding requirements and modalities for the CLB and their implications for Member States, to enable them contribute resources (financial, in-kind and expertise) towards the realization of this project. We express our support to the efforts being undertaken by the AU High Representative for the Operationalisation of the ASF in mobilizing resources within the continent. We appeal to our international partners, both bilateral and multilateral, to also assist in this effort;

(c) endorse the conduct of the planned AMANI AFRICA II cycle activities, with a view to addressing the gaps identified during the AMANI AFRICA I cycle. We encourage the Commission to take all steps required for the success of the AMANI AFRICA II cycle, including synchronising as much as possible the conduct of this exercise with the development of the CLB;

(d) adopt the proposal to establish a Maritime Information and Coordination Cell (MI2C) by 2012, as recommended by the Chairperson of the
Commission in his report on the role of the ASF in maritime safety and security [Rpt/Exp/V/STCDSS/(iv)2011 - Rpt/VIII/ACDS/(iv)2011], and in line with relevant AU decisions. We request the Commission, in consultation with the RECs/RMs, to finalize the modalities for the establishment of the MI2C. We agree to establish, under the leadership of the AU, a technical maritime working group comprising representatives of the RECs/RMs and relevant experts to make further recommendations on the future role of the ASF in maritime security and safety;

(e) commend the Government of Nigeria for its support in the convening of the Abuja Workshop of July 2011, and adopt the recommendation on the immediate implementation of the four-pillar structure of the PSOD, within the framework of the Maputo structure, which organizes the Division in two Units, and request the Commission to proceed immediately with the implementation thereof. We further request the Commission to expedite the appointment of the Chief of Staff for the PSOD, in line with the Declaration of our 4th meeting, it being understood that the appointment should be for a period of three years. We also encourage the Commission to do its utmost to expedite recruitment of additional staff in order to enhance the human resource capacity of the PSOD. We stress that both the position of Chief of Staff and those of officers seconded to the PSOD be filled with due respect for equitable regional representation, transparency and the principle of rotation among regions;

(f) take note of the proposal made by the Commission to establish a strategic defence office in order to further enhance the AU Strategic Headquarters [Rpt/Exp/V/STCDSS/(v)2011 - Rpt/VIII/ACDS/(v)2011]. We request the Commission to deepen its reflection in the light of the observations made, to seek the views of the RECs/RMs and to submit a report to the next meeting of the STCDSS. It is understood that this should, in no way, hamper the enhancement of the PSOD, through the implementation of the four-pillar structure, as articulated in paragraph 6 (e) above.

7. We recognize the urgent need for the Member States to contribute more significantly to the funding of AU peace support operations and, more generally, to efforts geared towards the prevention, management and resolution of conflict, as well as peace building. In this respect, we echo the call made by the extraordinary session of the Assembly, held in Addis Ababa on 25 May 2011, for all Member States in a position to do so to make voluntary contributions to the Peace Fund. We also pledge our full support to the efforts by the Commission to mobilize additional resources from the private sector and ordinary Africans, as part of the sustainability programme of the Year of Peace and Security in Africa. We request the Commission, working with the RECs/RMs, to convene, in 2012, a meeting that will bring together Member States and RECs/RMs on the funding of the ASF and the activities required for its full operationalisation.
8. We take note of the update provided by the Commission on the operations of AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), express satisfaction at the significant achievements made on the ground by AMISOM and the Forces of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia, and pay tribute to AMISOM Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs), for their commitment and steadfastness. We call on the United Nations, in line with the primary responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security, to provide to AMISOM a support commensurate with the challenges at hand, as reiterated by the PSC at its meeting of 13 September 2011. We urgently call on all Member States to contribute troops and resources to AMISOM to facilitate the effective discharge of the mandate of the Mission and to strengthen African leadership in the promotion of peace, security and stability on the continent. We also take note, with satisfaction, of the efforts being deployed for the implementation of the regional cooperation initiative on the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA), as well as of the renewed determination of all the affected countries to work towards the success of this African initiative, and encourage them and the Commission to persevere in their efforts.

9. We take note of the presentation by the Commission on the AU Policy Framework on Security Sector Reform (SSR), in line with the request made by the Assembly of the Union in January 2007, as well as of the briefing on the implementation, in Africa, of the Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (CWC), provided by the Technical Secretariat of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

10. We request the Commission to follow-up on all aspects of this Declaration and to report thereon to the next meeting of the STCDSS.