Joint Press release

African Union Commission and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) jointly launch Africa Facility to Support Inclusive Transitions

Nairobi, 17 July 2023 – The African Union Commission (AUC) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) launched the Africa Facility to Support Inclusive Transitions (AFSIT), on the side-lines of the 5th African Union Mid-Year Coordination Meeting, in Nairobi, Kenya, on 15 July 2023. AFSIT aims at providing support to countries undergoing complex political transitions and countries at risk.

In May 2023, African Union (AU) Heads of State and Government reiterated a zero tolerance stance against unconstitutional changes of government (UCG) and called for collective action in developing a robust mechanism for deepening democracy and collective security on the continent. In response to this call, the AU Commission and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have joined efforts to launch the AFSIT, an innovative initiative aimed at providing comprehensive programmatic support to African countries undergoing complex political transitions.

High-level speakers at the launch event included: H.E. Olusegun Obasanjo, Former President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria; Dr. Korir Sing'Oei, Principal Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs, Kenya – representing His Excellency William Ruto, President of the Republic of Kenya; Mr. Dhoihir Dhoulkamal, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation in charge of Diaspora and Francophony, Comoros – representing His Excellency Azali Assoumani, President of the Union of the Comoros and Chairperson of the African Union for 2023; and Ambassador Mohamed Thiaw, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Senegal and Chairperson of the Peace and Security Council in July 2023.

Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, stated in his welcoming remarks, “AFSIT is a practical and pragmatic mechanism that is
geared towards boosting the capacity of all actors in the democratic governance space. It is a Facility to capacitate those who will stand as watchdogs for democracy.

Ahunna Eziakonwa, UN Assistant Secretary-General, UNDP Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Africa, said, “The Facility calls for a re-focus on development, including good governance, human rights and access to basic services such as education and healthcare, as a critical means to not only prevent coups, but also sustain peace. This is particularly crucial in regions like the Sahel, which face a heightened risk of coups.”

The primary objective of AFSIT is to assist in the development of credible, inclusive and legitimate transition roadmaps, mechanisms and institutions, ultimately leading to the restoration of constitutional rule, democracy and stability in relevant countries. AFSIT complements existing AU, Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs) and UN instruments, as well as initiatives by development partners, to ensure inclusive transitions. The Facility will proactively anticipate, respond to and address complex political crises within AU Member States.

The implementation of AFSIT will occur in phases, with initial priority given to addressing UCG as defined by AU norms. This will encompass responses to military coup d’états and instances of democratic process manipulation. AFSIT will also extend support to ‘at risk countries’ teetering on the edge of a political crisis, as identified by early warning signs and data from the AU, RECs/RMs and the UN.

AU Member States, including members of the Peace and Security Council, Representatives from the UN, AU, RECs/RMs, as well as respective bilateral and multilateral stakeholders, participated at the launch event.

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