STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR RAMTANE LAMAMRA, COMMISSIONER FOR PEACE AND SECURITY AT THE OPEN SESSION OF THE PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENT, PEACE AND SECURITY

ADDIS ABABA, 21 NOVEMBER 2012.

Honorable Mrs. Susan Waffa-Oggo, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of The Gambia,

Excellences, Members of the Peace and Security Council

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good Afternoon

First of all, I would like to thank you, Honorable Minister, for chairing this meeting. By so doing, you rightly highlight the importance of this open session. I also wish to thank The Gambia, Chair of the month, for including the link among Development, Peace and Security in the PSC program of work and for making of this thematic session, a welcome opportunity for exchanges involving so many contributing stakeholders.

Thirdly, on behalf of the Commission and on my own personal behalf, let me also formally welcome non-PSC Members and AU partners to this open session which, as I have already indicated, is very important to the extent that the topic is at the core of the mandate of the Council and indeed, at the heart of the African Union agenda as a whole.
I also wish to indicate, from the beginning, that this is not the first time that the Council is convening an open session devoted to this topic. It can be recalled that in April, last year, at its 274th meeting, the Council was briefed on the World Bank’s World Development Report (WDR) 2011 – Conflict, Security and Development, by Sarah Cliffe, the Special Representative for the WDR 2011 and members of the Advisory Board, including myself.

Council will recall that the AU had participated actively in the elaboration of that Report and that one of the three substantive sessions of the World Development Report Advisory Board was held here in Addis Ababa.

Key in the focus of the Report were, among other important aspects, the links between national institutions and governance, citizen (Human) security, justice and employment creation in conflict prevention, as well as the need to effectively support the efforts at structural prevention of conflicts by regional organizations and to fully mobilize the international community towards the realization of that objective.

Furthermore, it may also be recalled that during that open session, Council emphasized the need for the AU and the World Bank to develop an implementation plan to follow up on the recommendations of the WDR 2011, and to consult regularly in order to enhance the effectiveness of programs and activities relating to conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction.

Chairperson, Excellences,

Research based on the experiences of many countries has shown that there is a very strong nexus, or inextricable link, among peace, security and development. Indeed, it has been found that there cannot be sustainable development without peace and security. And similarly, there cannot be lasting peace, security and stability without sustainable development. As such, peace, security and development are, as a matter of fact, all interdependent and, undeniably, mutually reinforcing.
As a matter of fact, there is now a growing international policy consensus that addressing violent conflict and promoting economic development both require a deeper understanding of the close relationship that exists among peace, security and development.

Research has also found that when state institutions do not adequately protect citizens, when they do not guard against corruption, or when they do not provide access to justice, and when markets do not provide job opportunities, or when communities have lost social cohesion- the likelihood of violent conflict, with all its attendant consequences, increases.

Indeed it has also been found that violent conflicts costs the average developing country roughly 30 years of its GDP growth, and that the countries in protracted conflicts can fall over 20%points behind in overcoming poverty. Besides, countries facing stark inequalities and weak institutions also face an increased risk of conflict. At the same time, poorly distributed wealth and a lack of sufficient job opportunities and freedoms – particularly for a large youth population can also increase the risk of instability.

Therefore, in order to ensure lasting peace and security, as well as sustainable development, on our continent, the capacity of state institutions to deliver the legitimately expected public goods and services, must be strengthened. In particular, the State capacity to provide and guarantee human security and sustainable development, based on the principles of good governance must be enhanced. This will help ensure effective conflict prevention and, its effective management. We are therefore compelled to invest more in citizen security, social justice, and job creation especially with a particular focus on the youth.

Just as the lack of development can feed the flames of conflict, economic and social progress can help prevent it and secure peace.

Chairperson, Excellences,
Allow me to conclude by stressing that sustained broadly-based development can help to effectively address the root causes of conflict and, thus, structurally preventing them. To achieve sustainable development, therefore, the process should be all-inclusive and equitable. This means including women, who can play a critical role in negotiations and peace processes, and young people, who have vast potential to contribute to the development of their societies.

In short, effective development on the basis of inclusiveness and fair distribution of national income as well as consultation, constitute the most effective route to diminishing the risks of conflict and enabling long-term peace, security and stability. Indeed, it is genuine development that gives citizens the true meaning to the ideals of freedom from fear and freedom from want which better define the human security that the AU strives to achieve for the benefit of all African people.

Once again, I want to thank the Chairperson for convening this session which, as I certainly hope, will afford all of us a proper forum to reflect deeply on the lessons learnt from our diverse experiences and best practices that can effectively and significantly contribute towards the creation of a prosperous peaceful and secure continent. And finally, I thank you all once gain for accepting our invitation to this important session.

I thank you