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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
275TH MEETING
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ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

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DECLARATION OF THE MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
ON THE STATE OF PEACE AND SECURITY IN AFRICA

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1. The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 275th meeting held at ministerial level, on 26 April 2011, debated on the state of peace and security in the continent. Council organized this debate within the context of the uprisings that took place in North Africa, which started in Tunisia and, subsequently, spread out to Egypt and Libya, degenerating, in the latter country, into an armed confrontation between the Government and the protestors.
2. Council noted the unprecedented nature of the new pattern of challenges facing the continent, which call for the evaluation and strengthening of existing frameworks and instruments, so as to efficiently and effectively anticipate, prevent, manage, and resolve them, as well as appropriately assist the countries concerned. Council further noted that neglect of the political and socio-economic needs of the population, in particular the youth, by Governments, create conditions favorable to the outbreak of crises and conflicts.
3. Council expressed its conviction that the uprisings in North Africa should be used as an opportunity for Member States to renew their commitment to the AU democratic and governance agenda, give added momentum to efforts deployed in this respect and implement the political and socio-economic reforms which are called for in every particular national situation.
4. In this respect, Council stressed the imperative of good governance, through the strengthening of democratic culture and institutions, respect for human rights, upholding of the rule of law and respect for people-centred constitutions, as means for preventing conflicts and enhancing the people's participation in fostering solutions to the prevailing problems. In this respect, Council stressed the importance of the debate and the decision on shared values adopted by the Assembly of the Union at its 16th Ordinary Session held in Addis Ababa, from 30 to 31st January 2011.
5. Council acknowledged that the AU has adopted a number of instruments on human rights, governance, democracy, disarmament, terrorism and good neighbourliness, which represent a consolidated framework of norms and principles, whose implementation would considerably reduce the risk of conflict and violence on the continent.
6. Council recalled the Tripoli Declaration on the Elimination of Conflicts in Africa and the Promotion of Sustainable Peace [SP/ASSEMBLY/PS/DECL.(1)] and the Plan of Action [SP/ASSEMBLY/PS/PLAN(1)], adopted by the Special Session of the Assembly of the Union on the Consideration and Resolution of Conflicts in Africa, held in Tripoli, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, on 31 August 2009, and noted the efforts made and the progress achieved in their implementation.
7. Council recognised the progress made in democratization and governance over the years, notwithstanding the obstacles and evolving challenges that have been encountered in the process.
8. Council recognized the fact that the persistence of crises and conflicts in different parts of Africa is partly due to lack of decisive improvements in political and economic governance on the continent, conditions that inevitably generate frustration and discontent in the population, culminating in revolts and revolutions in some situations.

9. Council further recognised the progress being made towards the full operationalisation of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), whose objective is to ensure that all the AU instruments designed for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in Africa operate in synergy and produce the expected outcomes. In this respect, Council welcomed the efforts deployed towards the early and systematic resolution of crises and conflicts on the continent.

10. Council emphasized, with respect to countries emerging from conflict, the need to effectively implement post-conflict reconstruction and development programmes, in line with the AU Policy on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development, with a view to preventing relapse into violence and sustaining peace and stability where they have been achieved.

11. Council, noting the provisions of Article 7(2), (3) and (4) of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, underlined the need to devise means and ways of ensuring full and effective implementation of the decisions taken regarding conflict prevention, management and resolution, as well as peace-building.

12. Council expressed serious concern that, in some crisis and conflict situations, African efforts to attain peace are undermined by foreign actors, whose motives are, at times, neither complementary to, nor consistent with the implementation of African solutions to African problems.

13. Having reviewed the state of peace and security on the continent, Council agreed on the following essential steps to be taken in order to accelerate the resolution of crises and conflicts, as well as to improve governance on the continent:

a) African Peace and Security Architecture

14. Council stressed the need to mobilize additional resources and political will for the full operationalization of APSA, building on the assessment of APSA conducted by the Commission in 2010 and the subsequent AU/Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution Roadmap, adopted in Zanzibar, in November 2010, and other relevant decisions of the AU.

b) Mobilization of resources from within the continent

15. Council noted with deep concern the over reliance on external resources and resulting difficulties in promoting African solutions to African problems. Council reiterated the need to mobilize increased resources from within the continent, both from Member States and other alternative sources, to enhance the continent's ownership of the efforts to implement the AU peace and security agenda. Council requested the Commission to take the required steps to this end.

c) Democratization and Consolidation of Democratic Institutions

16. Council emphasized the need, within the framework of the shared values and taking into account contexts specific to each country, to deepen the democratization process, through:

- i) the acceleration of signature and ratification, by Member States, of all AU instruments relating to democracy and governance, in particular the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance;

- ii) the full exercise, by Council, of the powers entrusted to it under Article 7(m) of the Peace and Security Council Protocol, which stipulates that Council, in collaboration with the Chairperson of the Commission, shall “follow-up, within the framework of its conflict prevention responsibilities, the progress towards the promotion of democratic practices, good governance, the rule of law, protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for the sanctity of human life by Member States”; and
- iii) the implementation of the shared values that underlie the continent’s democratization efforts, including the establishment, where required, and the strengthening of independent and impartial electoral bodies responsible for the conduct and management of elections, in line with the Union’s Declaration on the Principles Governing Democratic Elections in Africa, the adoption of appropriate measures to ensure a limit in the number of terms in office, and ensuring civilian control of the armed and security forces.

d) Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA)

17. Council recognized that the Solemn Declaration on the Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa [AHG/Decl.4 (XXXVI)], adopted at the 36th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU, held in Lomé, Togo, from 10 to 12 July 2000, remains the most comprehensive framework for addressing the interconnected issues of peace, security, stability and development in Africa. Thus, Council requested the Commission to take the necessary steps to ensure the revival of the CSSDCA.

e) The “Make Peace Happen Campaign”

18. The Make Peace Happen Campaign, launched in January 2010, made significant gains in giving more visibility to AU peace and security efforts and mobilizing support for AU-led initiatives in this area. In this respect, Council requested the Commission to take all necessary steps to follow up on the decision adopted by the Assembly at its 16th Ordinary Session.

f) Follow-up

19. Council requested the AU Panel of the Wise to undertake a comprehensive review, including the early convening of a workshop bringing together relevant stakeholders, of the existing mechanisms relating to democratisation and governance in Africa, and make recommendations to Council at a meeting to be convened no later than December 2011.

20. Finally, Council requested the Commission, in line with the relevant provisions of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly of the Union, to undertake the necessary consultations to determine the possibility of convening an Extraordinary Session of the Assembly, in May 2011, to review the state of peace and security on the continent, in light of the new crises and threats to peace and security in Africa.

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