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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Commissioner Chergui concludes official visit to China; Launches AU-China Strategic Dialogue for Peace and Security in Africa**

*Addis Ababa, 03 November 2014:* On the invitation of the Chinese Government, the African Union (AU) Commissioner for Peace and Security, Amb. Smail Chergui, paid an official visit to the People's Republic of China from 28 to 29 October 2014, during which he co-launched with China's Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Zhang Ming, the AU-China Strategic Dialogue for Peace and Security in Africa.

The visit provided an opportunity for both sides to review and strengthen their strategic partnership for the promotion of peace, security and stability in Africa. The parties further discussed ways and means of enhancing their cooperation in the global arena, including articulating Africa's positions at the UN Security Council, taking advantage of China's permanent membership in the Council. The Chinese side pledged to continue supporting the operationalization of the African Standby Force (ASF) and the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crisis (ACIRC), both of which are expected to attain full operational capability in 2015. China reiterated its commitment to continue assisting Africa's peace support operations, key among them being the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). Vice Minister Zhang Ming further indicated that the new Chinese cash grant to the AU of USD1.2 million is available.

With regard to the Ebola epidemic in West Africa, the Vice Minister conveyed the sympathy of the Chinese Government and People to the affected countries and informed the Commissioner that China will continue to provide direct assistance to the affected countries, as well as support to the AU's efforts to help stop the spread of the virus.

The AU delegation expressed its gratitude to China for the kind gesture of solidarity towards the three countries hardest-hit by the epidemic, and noted with satisfaction the readiness of the Chinese Government to assist in the post-epidemic reconstruction of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

On his part, Commissioner Chergui invited China to consider establishing a Peace Facility for Africa, similar to the African Peace Facility (APF) established by the European Union in 2004,

with a view to facilitating implementation of initiatives agreed upon under the Dialogue. The two parties agreed to finalize the MoU on the facility as soon as possible.

The AU and China agreed to work together in addressing peace and security challenges in the continent, including counter-terrorism, maritime security, disaster preparedness and response, post-conflict peace-building and reconstruction, and wildlife protection.

Before returning to Addis Ababa, the AU delegation visited the Peacekeeping Centre of the Ministry of National Defence in Beijing and Commissioner Chergui requested the Centre to support training for the ASF and ACIRC.

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Peace and Security

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