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## PRESS RELEASE

### **AU-UN workshop on accountability mechanisms for the African Union Peace Support Operations**

**Addis Ababa, 29 November 2017:** The African Union (AU) Commission convened, jointly with the United Nations (UN), as part of the development of its overall compliance framework, a consultative workshop on accountability mechanisms and measures for AU peace support operations (PSO) from 28-29 November 2017 at the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa. This is in line with the dedication of the AU and UN in ensuring that compliance with international humanitarian and human rights norms and standards is given the uppermost importance in peace operations.

This workshop is held in line with the AU-UN strategic partnership on peace and security, including through the Joint Framework signed on 19 April 2017 as well as UN Security Council resolution 2320.

The workshop also feeds into ongoing efforts to implement the recommendations of the Report on Predictable and Sustainable Financing for Peace in Africa, endorsed by the AU Assembly decision at its 27th ordinary session, held in Kigali in July 2016. The report sets out steps to be taken in terms of preventing, monitoring and responding to violations and abuses of human rights and international humanitarian law (IHL), as well as conduct and discipline violations and abuses.

The workshop discussed AU and UN experiences on operationalization and effectiveness of accountability and oversight mechanisms, and identified best practices that are applicable to AU PSO. Participants agreed that effective accountability mechanisms are based on principles of independence, impartiality, transparency and participation. Some of the processes discussed related to safe and accessible reception of complaints, conduct of prompt, thorough, impartial and independent investigations that support preservation of evidence and criminal accountability processes. The importance of taking into account victims' rights and protection, and constructive engagement with Troop/Police Contributing Countries (T/PCCs) and external partners, including the UN and civil society actors, was also addressed. Additionally, it was recognised that implementation and achievement of these objectives will not be possible without dedicated financial resources.

In moving forward, the AU and UN agreed on a set of key elements for effective accountability for AU PSOs. These include internal monitoring and reporting on allegations of violations, complaint reception mechanisms, investigation and oversight mechanisms, remedial measures and enhanced strategic communications to enable sustained engagement with T/PCCs on meeting their obligations under international law to ensure accountability.

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