



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Egypt to host 7<sup>th</sup> AU High-Level Retreat of Special Envoys and Mediators on the theme: "*Mediation Practices and Contemporary Wars*"**

*Addis Ababa, 21 October* -- The African Union (AU) will convene its 7<sup>th</sup> Annual High-Level Retreat of Special Envoys and Mediators on the Promotion of Peace, Security and Stability in Africa, in Egypt on 26-27 October 2016.

The Theme of this year's Retreat, "*Mediation Practices and Contemporary Wars*," will offer participants an opportunity to reflect and exchange views on the multiple ways in which mediation practices can and must adapt to the changing nature of contemporary conflicts in Africa. This thematic focus is based on the observation that Africa's, and indeed the global, conflict landscape is increasingly complex, evidencing a multiplicity of conflict types, actors and dynamics, as well as hybridity of motives, with political motives often dressed-up in extremist religious ideologies driven by violent identity-based factionalisms and transnational criminal agendas.

Building on a keynote address titled, "*Mediating for Peace in Today's World: Lessons from Peacemakers in 21st Century Africa*," Retreat participants will discuss the changing patterns of violence and domains of conflict mediation; global practices and experiences in mediation; selected case studies of conflict trends in Africa; and emerging challenges for mediators in the Continent.

Furthermore, participants will discuss the findings and recommendations of a World Peace Foundation report on a study commissioned by the African Union, and submitted last July to the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, Ambassador Smail Chergui, under the title, "*African Politics, African Peace – A Review of African Peace Missions*."

This event falls within the framework of a constellation of AU initiatives aimed at silencing the guns in Africa by the year 2020. The 7<sup>th</sup> Retreat in Egypt will build on a similar event held last year in Namibia, during which participants discussed "*Terrorism, Mediation and Armed Groups*."

Retreat participants include all AU Special Envoys, Mediators and Heads of Liaison Offices, All UN Special Representatives, Senior EU, Mediators, national Envoys, as well as practitioners, researchers and top academics on mediation and conflict resolution in Africa.

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Peace and Security

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