



**HIGH LEVEL RETREAT ON THE PROMOTION
OF PEACE, SECURITY AND STABILITY IN AFRICA**

**CAIRO, EGYPT
26 – 28 AUGUST 2010**

HL/Retreat/YoPS.Decl.(I)

**MAKING PEACE HAPPEN IN AFRICA IN 2010 AND BEYOND:
DEVELOPING COMMON STRATEGIES AND ENHANCING COORDINATION**

CAIRO CALL FOR PEACE

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1. At the initiative of the African Union (AU), and within the framework of the Year of Peace and Security (YoPS) programme of activities, a High-Level Retreat on the Promotion of Peace, Security and Stability in Africa took place in Cairo, Egypt, from 26 to 28 August 2010. The gathering aimed at giving further impetus to efforts to bring to an end the scourge of armed conflicts and political crises in the African continent and to consolidate peace where it has been achieved.
2. The Retreat was organized in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Cairo Centre for Training on Conflict Resolution and Peacekeeping in Africa (CCCPA) and the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD Centre). It brought together senior officials and Special Envoys/Representatives of the AU, the Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, the United Nations, the European Union, the League of Arab States, the International Organization of *La Francophonie* and the Organisation of the Islamic Conference, as well as representatives of the permanent members of the UN Security Council. Malawi, in its capacity as Chair of the AU, and Djibouti, Chair of the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) for August 2010, also participated in the meeting.
3. Our Retreat was energized by the common commitment to Make Peace Happen throughout Africa without delay. More specifically, we were motivated by the cry for peace emanating from the African people and the pledge made in Tripoli, a year ago, by the continent's leaders, to deal, once and for all, with the scourge of conflicts and violence. The first of its kind, our Retreat represents an important high-level forum for reflection on the challenges of forging peace and security and holding ourselves accountable to our promises to help making peace a reality.
4. We applaud the important gains made over the recent years towards the promotion of peace, security and stability on the continent. This progress has been driven by African people and their leaders, with the support of international partners. At the same time, we remain gravely concerned about the continued prevalence of violent conflicts in different parts of the continent, with their attendant humanitarian, political and economic consequences, as well as the fragility of a number of countries that have recently emerged from conflict. We also note with deep concern the immediate threats posed by terrorism, drug trafficking, illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons, piracy and other associated scourges, such as illegal fishing and dumping of toxic wastes, and the long-term challenges arising from climate change and enduring poverty.
5. In the course of our deliberations, we devoted particular attention to cross-cutting issues relevant to conflict prevention and resolution and peace-building. These included: (i) unconstitutional changes of government, bearing in mind the renewed determination of the AU to effectively address this scourge through a "zero tolerance"

policy for coups d'état, as well as for transgressions of democratic norms whose repetition and persistence could lead to unconstitutional changes of government; (ii) election-related violence and disputes, with their potential to undermine the democratization processes underway on the continent; (iii) peace, justice and reconciliation and the need to ensure that these three objectives are pursued in a holistic and mutually reinforcing way; (iv) disarmament, demobilization and reinsertion, as well as security sector reform, which should be designed to suit local conditions and whose successful completion is critical to the consolidation of peace; (iv) management of natural resources and wealth sharing; and (vi) challenges linked to the implementation of peace agreements.

6. We also reviewed the situations on the ground, identifying the challenges being faced, as well as how to strengthen current efforts to advance peace, security, stability and reconciliation. In particular, we focused our attention on: (i) Somalia, Sudan (Darfur, implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement – CPA – and democratic transformation) and other related issues; (ii) the Great Lakes Region and countries affected by the activities of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA); (iii) West Africa (Niger, Guinea, Guinea Bissau and Côte d'Ivoire); (iv) Western Sahara and the Sahelian belt.

7. In reviewing these situations, we recognized that many conflicts have significant regional and international dimensions. Consequently, we endeavored to strengthen regional approaches to peace-making and peace-building and, where such collaborative approaches do not yet exist, to identify how they might best be established.

8. We reiterate that the onus for conflict prevention, resolution and peace building falls primarily on national stakeholders. We urge them to take full ownership of peace processes in their respective countries, and pledge to support them in their efforts and to contribute to the strengthening of their capabilities. In this respect, we emphasize the critical importance of governance, respect of the rule of law, fair allocation of resources among all segments of the population, and national leadership in the prevention of conflicts and the promotion of sustainable peace. We also stress the importance of comprehensive post-conflict reconstruction and development programmes in countries emerging from conflicts, building on relevant AU, UN and other institutions' instruments and policies, and strengthening them where required. More generally, we encourage African countries to put in place national architectures for peace on the basis of their commitments within the framework of the AU, the UN and other relevant organizations.

9. We underline the centrality of the culture of peace, especially through education, so that future generations can be spared the scourge of war and violence. Accordingly, we welcome the drawing competition to be launched continent-wide, to enable young people to share their vision of peace and contribute to the attainment of

this goal, building the successful conclusion of the national competition organized by the Supreme Council of Antiquities of Egypt.

10. We agree on the need for continued documentation and recording of lessons learned and assessments of past and current processes, as well as research into the causes and dynamics of conflict, to deepen our knowledge of the issues confronting us and enhance the effectiveness of our responses.

11. The decision of the Heads of State and Government of the AU to proclaim 2010 as the Year of Peace and Security in Africa gave particular significance to our Retreat. Consequently, we reiterate our commitment and that of our respective organizations and institutions to take concrete steps in support of this initiative to further the objective of a conflict-free Africa.

12. In particular, we stress the importance of the United Nations-proclaimed International Day of Peace (Peace Day) on 21st September, and pledge our full support for the cessation of hostilities in all conflict areas and the consolidation of peace where it has been achieved. We further subscribe to the other objectives of Peace Day as captured in the decision adopted by the 15th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union, held in Kampala, in July 2010, including intensified distribution of humanitarian supplies, materials and services to communities in conflict areas, the observation of one minute of silence for peace across Africa, at 10.00 am GMT, the implementation of humanitarian and other related activities by the armed and security forces, and the teaching of the *Make Peace Happen* Lesson Plan in all schools on Peace Day or during other relevant occasions.

13. Bearing in mind that the achievement of lasting peace on the continent requires an ever closer coordination of efforts between all stakeholders, at both strategic and operational levels, we encourage the AU to organize another Retreat next year and to institutionalize it thereafter, based on a periodicity to be determined. We further agree to ensure a regular exchange of views and information, as well as close action on the ground, among all concerned, including the establishment, where required, of regional fora of Mediators, in support for peace in Africa. In this respect, we task the AU and the UN, working with the other partners, to submit concrete proposals and recommendations on how best to achieve this objective.

14. We make this call for peace in Africa, and appeal to all stakeholders, including women, youth, the African civil society, intellectuals and the private sector, as well as all international partners, to join and actively support the initiative to make peace happen in 2010 and beyond, for the achievement of peace between nations and non-violence in our homes, communities and schools requires everyone's involvement and support.

15. We express our sincere gratitude to the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt and to the CCCPA, for their generous hospitality and all the facilities provided for the successful convening of the Retreat, as well as to the other partners who contributed to this event, including the HD Centre and the League of Arab States.

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Making Peace Happen in Africa in 2010 and Beyond: Developing Common Strategies and Enhancing Coordination Cairo Call for Peace

African Union

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