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EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
Thirty-Sixth Ordinary Session
06 - 07 February 2020
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

EX.CL/1192(XXXVI)
Original : English

PROGRESS REPORT OF THE OPERATIONALIZATION OF THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISION ASSEMBLY/AU/DEC. 710 (XXXI) ON THE AFRICAN UNION CENTRE FOR POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The establishment of the African Union Centre for Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development Centre (Cairo Centre) presents an opportunity to strengthen efforts towards consolidating peace in the Continent. As a specialized technical agency of the African Union (AU), the Centre complements efforts on the Continent to more effectively implement the AU Policy Framework on Post-conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD). As the international discourse on peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction and development continues to adapt to the ever-evolving peace and security environments, the Centre could usher in a new era for the AU, and its peace and security architecture (APSA), within the context consolidating its role as a leading actor in efforts to build and sustain peace on the continent.

2. As a strategic and operational framework, the PCRD policy Framework provides guidance for key stakeholders to undertake strategic and targeted interventions. As elaborated in previous decisions and pronouncements on PCRD, in particular the Press Statement [PSC/PR/BR. (DXXVIII)] and Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM. (DXCIII)] adopted at its 528th and 593rd meetings held on 30 July 2015 and 26 April 2016 respectively, which stressed the need for renewed efforts towards PCRD in order to consolidate peace wherever it has been achieved on the continent, the AU, including its Organs, have remained actively seized with the implementation of PCRD activities in different parts of the Continent. In the case of the Lake Chad Bassin which has been devasted by the Boko Haram terrorist group, the Commission has contributed to the elaboration of regional stabilization and recovery strategy for the Bassin.

3. This report provides an overview of the progress made as directed by Decision (AU/Dec.710 (XXXI) of the 2018 AU Summit held in Nouakchott, at which Egypt's offer to host the Cairo Centre was accepted. The Decision requested the Commission to ''develop the structure of the AUC-PCRD and prepare a comprehensive report on the financial and technical needs of the AUC-PCRD for consideration by the relevant AU Policy Organs, prior to its submission to the Ordinary Session of the Assembly, through the Executive Council, scheduled for February 2019."

II. PROGRESS IN OPERATIONALIZING THE AFRICAN UNION CENTRE FOR POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

4. Efforts continue to be guided by the urgent need for the AU to put in place mechanisms to consolidate continental efforts that should ensure post-conflict societies move from recovery and reconstruction to long-term development and avoid relapse into violence and stagnation. In this regard, it is critical to be sensitive to the fact that the requisite capacities and resources should be made available to the AU Commission to ensure sustainable engagement towards properly calibrating responses to respond to existing and emerging security challenges on the Continent.

5. Extensive consultations were carried out by the AU Commission to agree on the organizational design and structure of the Centre, starting with the consultations in November 2018 between the Peace and Security Department and the delegation from the Egyptian Embassy in Addis Ababa which included officials from Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Egypt.

6. Furthermore, a Commission-wide technical meeting was convened at director level by the Director for the Peace and Security held in May 2019, which further elaborated the mandate and functions, structure, funding and the host agreement. Subsequently, internal meetings with relevant Commission Departments were convened, which finalized the organizational design and structure of the Centre. The design and the structure were considered and adopted on 15 January 2020 by the Permanent Representative Committee Sub-Committees on Structural Reforms and on General Supervision and Coordination on Budgetary, Financial and Administrative Matters at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. It is also worth noting that the Host Agreement for the Centre was signed last month, December 2019, between the Chairperson of the AU Commission H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat and H.E. Sameh Shoukry, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Arab Republic of Egypt, on the margins of the inaugural session of the Aswan Forum for Sustainable Peace and Development in Africa.

7. Notably, substantive work has been done towards a rapid start-up of the Centre whereby efforts continue to be deployed by the AU Commission, working with the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt, pursuant to relevant AU Assembly Decisions. In this context, an AU Consultative Assessment Mission, led by the Director of the Peace and Security Department, was deployed to Cairo, Egypt from 15 to 19 December 2019, to undertake consultations with the relevant Egyptian authorities. The AU Team was received by Ambassador Soha Gandi, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs responsible for African Organizations and Communities, accompanied by Ambassador Mohamed Karim Sherif, Deputy Director responsible for African Organizations and Communities and other officials. The consultations in Cairo saw an exchange of views on the proposed structure of the Centre which should be light at the initial phase and would gradually expand with time, depending of the needs and availability of resources. Regarding funding of the Centre, the Assistant Minister informed the AU Team while in Cairo, that the Egyptian Government has provided an amount of US$250,000.00 as part of its support towards the establishment of the Centre, costs for technical needs assessment visits to a select number of regions, as well as for the purchase of needed materials and equipment. On its part, the AU allocated an amount of US$300,140.00 from Member States budget, through the 2019 supplementary budgetary process. Notably, the Member States funding is vital as it would reduce dependency on voluntary contributions and partner support, which do not guarantee predictability and sustainability of the Centre's operations. At the time of finalizing this Report, consultations were undertaken to ensure the rapid operationalization of the Centre.

8. It should be noted that the proposed organizational design and structure of the Centre were determined with a view to ensuring its optimal functioning. It is proposed that the organizational structure and functions of the Centre should be based upon the six

pillars of the AU PCRD Policy, namely: security; humanitarian/emergency assistance; political governance and transition; socio-economic reconstruction and development; human rights, justice and reconciliation; and women, gender and youth. Key considerations here are that, as articulated in the PCRD Policy, the Centre complements other actors within the AU PCRD Policy implementation framework, with a clear focus to guide PCRD programmes and projects. Accordingly, the proposed organizational structure and hierarchical configuration ensures smooth decision-making process and reporting lines, thus enhancing internal efficiency, productivity and operational effectiveness. **Annexures 1 and 2 show the proposed Organigramm and Roadmap for the operationalization of the Centre.**

III. OBSERVATIONS

9. Given the urgent need to operationalize the Centre, it is imperative that the Centre's operations commence in January/February 2020. To show practical utility at the onset, it is essential for the Centre to undertake some technical need assessment missions in post-conflict areas to lay a solid foundation for the Centre's operations.

10. During the initial phase of the Centre's operations, a contribution from the Egyptian Government remains the reliable source for the Centre's operations. Therefore, going forward, resource mobilization will be critical. For 2020, activities would be funded from the Egyptian contribution and Member States support through resources allocated from the supplementary budget process to be undertaken in 2020. Member States are therefore encouraged to fund the Centre as part of the regular budget beginning in 2021.

III. RECOMMENDATION

11. The Assembly may wish to endorse the structure, mandate and vision of the Centre with the related aspects and urge Member States to support the full operationalization of the Centre.

Annexure 1: Proposed 2020 roadmap towards the full operationalization of the AU Centre for Post-conflict Reconstruction and Development in Cairo, Egypt															
Activity Description	**Dec 2019**	**Jan 2020**	**Feb 2020**	**Mar 2020**	**April 2020**	**May 2020**	**Jun 2020**	**Jul 2020**	**Aug 2020**	**Sept 2020**	**Oct 2020**	**Nov 2020**	**Dec 2020**	**Jan 2021**	**Feb 2021**
Consultations with key stakeholders with a view to building consensus on the Centre's approaches and methodology of work, human resource management, financing, workplan and reporting lines	X														
Signing of Host Agreement	X														
Adoption of the structure			X												
Procurement of equipment and assets			X	X	X										
Undertake programmatic aspects of the Centre's mandate			X	X	X	X	X	X							
Presentation of Budget for the Centre's personnel and operations (through AU budgetary supplementary process)								X	X	X					
Development of terms of reference for the approved positions			X	X	X	X									
Advertisement, short-listing and interviews										X	X				
Finalization of recruitment of Staff												X		X	
Deployment of Staff														X	
Official launch of the Centre															X
Second progress report submitted to the AU Assembly															X
Implementation of the AU PCRD Policy			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

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2020-02-07

Progress Report of the Operationalization of the African Union Commission on the Implementation of Decision Assembly/AU/DEC. 710 (XXXI) on the African Union Centre for Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development

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