

Communiqué of the Fourth African Union-United Nations Annual Conference

9 December 2020

Held Virtually

1. On 9 December 2020, African Union (AU) Commission Chairperson Moussa Faki Mahamat and United Nations (UN) Secretary-General António Guterres convened virtually the Fourth African Union-United Nations Annual Conference, at a time of unprecedented challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. The Chairperson and the Secretary-General discussed cooperation on peace and security, development and human rights and reviewed progress in the implementation of their joint commitments.
3. The Chairperson and the Secretary-General acknowledged the shared understanding that they have on the need for a renewed and inclusive multilateralism, the challenges on the continent and globally and the unique relationship over the last four years that has helped solidify the AU and UN partnership.
4. The Chairperson and the Secretary-General welcomed the significant progress made by working together on the AU-UN Joint Framework on Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security and on the AU-UN Development Framework and agreed to accelerate joint efforts in the context of the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and the Decade of Action for the SDGs. They agreed to constitute a group to work with the UN Deputy Secretary General to advance their common agenda.
5. The Chairperson and the Secretary-General also discussed the challenges confronted within the partnership including the vital importance of achieving strategic convergence between the UN Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council on Africa's peace and security agenda and ensuring that African's positions and voice are adequately considered.

6. The Chairperson and the Secretary-General reiterated the importance of achieving gender equality, women's rights and equal participation and leadership in all spheres, and in the inclusion of women and the youth as a foundation for good governance, sustainable peacebuilding efforts, and yield returns by leveraging Africa's demographic dividends for growth and development.
7. The Conference reviewed ongoing joint efforts to promote peace and stability across the continent. On Libya, they expressed concern over reports of the violation of the ceasefire in southern Libya and called on the parties to adhere to their commitments as stipulated in the 23 October ceasefire agreement. They welcomed progress made in the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum (LPDF) and underscored that only a negotiated political solution and national reconciliation process can address the numerous challenges facing the Libyan people who deserve a permanent respite from violence and conflict. The Chairperson and the Secretary-General expressed their common will to strengthen their cooperation on this particular case.
8. On the Sahel region, they expressed concern over the security and humanitarian situation and reaffirmed the determination of both Organizations to continue supporting national, regional and international initiatives in the region. They reiterated their call on international partners to scale up their support and provide the resources and assistance required by the G5 Sahel Joint Force.
9. They stressed the need to deepen the AU-UN-ECOWAS collaboration to support the transition in Mali, including the launch of priority reforms and preparation of elections and underscoring the need to prioritize the needs of youth, women's equal and effective participation and strengthened social cohesion.
They welcome the transitional government's efforts regarding the development of a consensual roadmap for the implementation of the Peace Agreement provisions.
10. Regarding the Horn of Africa, the Conference highlighted the commitment of both Organizations to the on-going political transitions in Ethiopia, Sudan and South Sudan, and underscored the need for sustained and coordinated international

support through which the region can fully realize its potential and deal with the challenges it currently faces.

11. On the situation in Ethiopia's Tigray region, the Chairperson and the Secretary-General underscored the imperative need to protect civilians, ensure the respect for human rights, and facilitate unfettered humanitarian access for the provision of life-saving assistance. They welcomed the decision by the Chairperson of the African Union, President Cyril Ramaphosa to appoint three Envoys to express in this circumstances the african wise solidarity to ethiopian People. They further called for a dialogue and full respect of stability, territorial integrity, unity and the constitutional order in Ethiopia.
12. On Somalia, the African Union and the United Nations underscored the need for dialogue on the upcoming elections to ensure the delivery of free, fair and transparent elections in February 2021. They further called for continued engagement among Somalia's leaders to establish an agreed roadmap to universal elections in 2024/25. They stressed that any agreement on international support to Somalia's security environment post-2021 must ensure that the gains made by AMISOM are not reversed and called on international partners to provide resources for the implementation of the Somali Transition Plan (STP). They further called for commitment by all Somali stakeholders towards achieving the transition plan and targets.
13. On the Central African Republic, the Chairperson and the Secretary-General welcomed the progress made in the preparations for the general elections, as well as the implementation of the Political Agreement, signed in February 2019, between the Government and armed groups. They further encouraged signatory parties to redouble efforts to advance the peace process, including the full implementation of the Political Agreement. They also called on all political stakeholders to continue working together to create conditions conducive to the holding of peaceful, credible and inclusive elections within constitutional timelines.

14. On the Democratic Republic of Congo, they expressed concern over political tensions, which could divert efforts to address security challenges in conflict-affected areas where the humanitarian situation has deteriorated. They called upon all stakeholders to resolve their differences through dialogue, in accordance with the Constitution and the greater interest of the Congolese people.
15. On Mozambique, the conference took note of the ongoing close coordination between the SADC, AU and the UN and agreed to continue collaboration among the three organizations to ensure coherence and complementarity of approaches.
16. The Conference exchanged views on the socio-political and pre- and post-electoral situations in Africa. The meeting agreed to foster complementarity in electoral support to Member States and undertake joint conflict prevention initiatives aimed at mitigating election-related crises.
17. The Conference further agreed to work together to support AU Member States efforts to strengthen their electoral institutions and processes and enhance their capacities to organize peaceful, democratic, credible, transparent and inclusive elections while upholding rights to political participation, and respect for freedom of expression and the press.
18. The Chairperson and the Secretary-General expressed deep concern over the human, social, economic and political impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in Africa, which is exacerbating fragilities, impacting disproportionately women, youth and the most vulnerable. The Chairperson welcomed the rapid response support from the UN development system through the development of the UN Socioeconomic Response and Recovery Framework and context-specific nations socioeconomic response and recovery plans.
19. They further underscored the importance of robust AU-UN cooperation at the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, which demands a collective, coordinated, and unified response, including on the socio-economic side, that leaves no country and no person behind, and ensuring that the COVID-19 responses and measures contribute to longer-term recovery, including by reducing inequalities and discrimination; increasing investments in healthcare and social protection for all.

20. They discussed the rollout of vaccines in Africa. They reaffirmed their commitment to support a coordinated international approach on debt relief for African countries and asserted the need for full debt restructuring. They noted efforts advanced through meetings co-convened by the Secretary-General, Canada and Jamaica to advocate for an ambitious global financing response to the crisis. They welcomed the G20's Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI) and called for its extension and full implementation, as well as expanding it to middle income African countries also strongly affected by the crisis. They called also for mobilization of increased finance, including through meeting ODA commitments and better leveraging of private finance, and to place women and youth front and centre in addressing the impacts from COVID-19. They also agreed that the support of AfCFTA would remain a priority for the AU-UN partnership and sustainable development, especially as countries move to start trading under the AfCFTA on 1 January 2021.
21. They reiterated Africa's call for US\$100 billion every year for the next three years to support Africa with recovery and called for support to the private sector with a release of new Special Drawing Rights.
22. Finally, they emphasized the need for a green and sustainable recovery which is inclusive of women and the youth.
23. The Chairperson and the Secretary-General agreed to convene the Fifth AU-UN Annual Conference at a mutually convenient time in 2021.

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