

AFRICAN UNION

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**REPORT OF THE PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
ON ITS ACTIVITIES AND
THE STATE OF PEACE AND SECURITY IN AFRICA**

REPORT OF THE PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL ON ITS ACTIVITIES AND THE STATE OF PEACE AND SECURITY IN AFRICA

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present Report of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) on its Activities and the State of Peace and Security in Africa is submitted to the Assembly of the AU pursuant to Article 7(q) of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the AU. The Report covers the period from the 30st Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the AU, held in Addis Ababa, from 28 – 29 January 2018, to the 31st Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union taking place in Nouakchott, Mauritania, from 1 to 2 July 2018.

2. The report covers the activities carried out by the PSC during the period under review and provides an overview of the state of peace and security in the continent with respect to conflict and crisis situations, presented in the respective geographic regional settings as well as the status of the implementation of various key issues of continental scope within the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA).

II. ACTIVITIES OF THE PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL OF THE AFRICAN UNION

3. Throughout the period under review the PSC pursued its efforts in addressing conflict and crisis situations, as well as thematic peace and security issues, and also undertook field missions to some conflict areas in the continent.

4. During the reporting period, in the PSC has held 34 meetings during the reporting period. The meetings covered the following situations: Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Darfur (Sudan), Guinea-Bissau, Mali/Sahel, Somalia and South Sudan. The PSC also considered the activities of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), the African Union/United Nations Hybrid Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) and the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) against Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) and the RCI-LRA. The meetings also considered the development of the African Standby Force (ASF) and the AU Peace Fund.

5. The PSC also held meetings on thematic issues, namely the plight of women and children in conflict situations in Africa; prevention of ideology of hate, genocide and hate crimes in Africa; Effective Take-off of the AU Humanitarian Agency (AUHA): Addressing the Impact of Terrorism and Armed conflicts on Africa's Social Fabric"; Nuclear Energy, Non-Proliferation and Disarmament: International Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Africa and the Status of the African Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty, Nexus between corruption and conflict resolution and its implications for peace and security in Africa; Africa's Peace and Security Landscape by the Year 2023 (End of First Ten-Year Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063): A Prospective Analysis of Peace and Security Challenges; African Migrants Crisis: Imperative for Expediting Free Movement of Policy in Africa; Continental Results Framework for Monitoring and Reporting on the Implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Africa; Link between

Climate Change and Conflicts in Africa and addressing Security Implications; the Principles of Protection of Civilians in Conflict Areas in Africa; illicit flow and financing of arms in Africa: source of conflicts and impediments to silencing the guns in Africa; Progress of the African Union Border Programme 2017-2018; Refugee protection, migration and Human Rights in Africa; the role of Africa in the Harmonization of Initiatives and operationalization of APSA in the Sahel; and Security and Migration in Africa. In all meetings where the PSC discussed thematic issues, communiqués and press statements were adopted and disseminated. In addition, the PSC exchanged views on the conduct of its field missions to conflict and post conflict situations. Notably, during its meeting on illicit flows and financing of arms in Africa, the PSC had an exchange of view on African efforts towards silencing the guns within the overall peace efforts in Africa and how the international community could contribute to these efforts with representatives of the UN Security Council based in Addis Ababa. In the run up to the 31st Ordinary Session of the Assembly, the PSC had scheduled a meeting at the level of Heads of State and Government on 30 June 2018, to consider the situation in South Sudan.

6. During its 761th meeting held on 5 April 2017, the PSC received a briefing on the prevention of ideology of hate, genocide and hate crimes in Africa, on the commemoration of the 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi in Rwanda, the PSC welcomed decision 72/550 of the UN General Assembly of 26 January 2018 which designates 7th April of each year as the International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, and decided to designate 7th April of each year as the African Union Day of Commemoration of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. In this regard, the Assembly may wish to endorse the decision of the PSC *‘to designate 7th April of each year as the African Union Day of Commemoration of the 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi in Rwanda’*. The Assembly may further wish to endorse the PSC decision to correct the nomenclature of the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, to be: *“The 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi in Rwanda”*.

7. Furthermore, the PSC at its 771st meeting held on 11 May 2018, on the African Migrants Crisis: Imperative for Expediting Free Movement Policy in Africa, endorsed the establishment of the African Migration Observatory, as proposed by His Majesty Mohammed VI, King of Morocco, the AU Champion for Migration, which aims mainly at collecting data, ensuring information exchange and coordination between African countries. In this regard, the Assembly may wish to endorse the PSC decision to establish the African Migration Observatory.

8. During the reporting period, the PSC undertook three field missions. The first field mission was jointly undertaken from 7 to 9 March 2018, by the PSC and the European Union Political and Security Committee (EUPSC) to the CAR, in line with the previous joint communiqués adopted by both Organs to undertake joint field missions to conflict and post conflict areas to get an-on-the-field view and interact with the stakeholders. During this mission, the PSC was accompanied by the Chairperson of the PRC Sub-Committee on Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and a contribution of

100,000 USD was made to support the provision of the basic needs to the IDPs in Bria. The Joint Mission underlined that the return to constitutional order in the CAR and the progress made to date by the Government and the constitutional institutions, are the first key steps in the process of recovery, stabilization and peacebuilding in the country and stressed that the support being provided by the AU and the EU, in close coordination with the UN, is to achieve this objective. The Joint Mission further reaffirmed full support for the implementation of the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in the CAR and the Libreville Roadmap and welcomed the efforts of the AU and the Panel of Facilitators aimed at expediting the implementation process. Furthermore, the Joint Mission emphasized the important role of the region in efforts towards the resolution of the conflict in the CAR.

9. The second field mission was undertaken to the Republic of South Sudan from 14 to 18 April 2018. During the field mission, the PSC acknowledged the efforts deployed by various actors through different peace processes in finding lasting peace in South Sudan, namely the HLRF launched by IGAD, the National Dialogue launched by H.E President Salva Kiir and the reunification of the SPLM currently led by Uganda and Egypt. The PSC urged all stakeholders involved in those different processes to harmonize and coordinate their efforts with the view of converging all such initiatives in order to achieve peace and security in the country, as well as to continue to provide support to the alleviation of humanitarian sufferance in the country.

10. The third field mission was undertaken to the Republic of Sudan, Khartoum and Darfur, from 5 to 9 May 2018. The PSC noted reports of an improved security environment since its last visit to in May 2017 and commended the Government of Sudan for the efforts deployed towards stabilizing Darfur and underscored that its major concern was the safety and security of the IDPs and their relationship with the Government. However, the PSC noted that there is need to address issues relating to their return, especially as it relates to the access to land and emphasized that the DDPD still offers an opportunity to address land matters in Sudan. The PSC stressed that the Government, through the residual committees of the Darfur Regional Authority (DRA), should intensify efforts towards addressing land issues, IDPs returns, reconciliation, peace building and addressing the root causes of the Sudanese conflict in Darfur. The PSC also emphasized that the withdrawal of UNAMID and that the process should be conducted in a gradual manner, while ensuring that protection of civilians is not compromised.

11. As part of the efforts to activate Subsidiary Bodies / Sub-Committees established by the PSC under Article 8 (5) of its Protocol, the Committee of Experts (CoE) has met several times to provide targeted support within the activities of the PSC, including discussing on how to revitalize the PSC Sub Committee on Sanctions. The CoE also held a workshop at the Headquarters of the United Nations in New York, United States of America, where it held consultations with the Experts of the UN Security Council in preparation of the 12th Annual Joint Consultative Meeting between the PSC and the UN Security Council scheduled for mid-July 2018, in which they informally agreed on the agenda items. The CoE also had an opportunity to acquaint themselves with the working

methods of the UNSC, including its subsidiary bodies, in particular, the UN Sanction Committee which will help the PSC CoE to reflect on how the PSC Sub-Committee on Sanctions can be operationalized.

III. STATE OF PEACE AND SECURITY IN AFRICA

A. CONFLICT AND CRISIS SITUATIONS

(i) Indian Ocean

12. The situation in **Madagascar** is marked by a difficult political situation following the divergent points of view between the Government and the Malagasy opposition concerning the electoral laws voted on 3 April 2018 by the Lower House of Parliament, followed by the Senate, without taking into account the amendments made by opposition parties and the Civil Society Organisations. Within this context, on 21 April 2018, the Members of Parliament of the opposition organised demonstrations, which had been banned by the authorities, resulting in violent clashes between protesters and the police in the city centre of Antananarivo, causing two deaths and injured people.

13. Within the framework of the efforts of the AU to support Madagascar to enhance peace, security, stability and national reconciliation in the country, the AU Commission Chairperson, Moussa Faki Mahamat, dispatched to Antananarivo, from 7 to 11 May 2018, Ambassador Ramtane Lamamra, High Representative of the AU to “Silence the Guns”. The mission was a continuation of the previous mission he undertook to Madagascar, from 20 to 23 November 2017.

14. During his mission, the High Representative, among others, endeavoured to coordinate his mediation efforts with those of the Special Envoys of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), Joaquim Chissano, of the United Nations, Abdoulaye Bathily, and of the European Union (EU), Koen Vervaeke, also deployed by their respective organisations, as well as with the Ambassadors and representatives of the countries and organisations, members of the International Support Group in Madagascar (GIS-M). The Envoys of the AU, SADC, the United Nations and the EU were received in audience, on several occasions, by the President of the Republic of Madagascar, Hery Rajaonarimampianina. They also held talks with the leaders of the main Malagasy institutions, as well as with former Presidents Didier Ratsiraka, Marc Ravalomanana and Andry Rajoelina and other Malagasy political or religious personalities.

15. These consultations led to consultations between the three main Malagasy stakeholders, namely the current President of the Republic of Madagascar, as well as former Presidents Marc Ravalomanana and Andry Rajoelina, with a view to negotiating and signing a Political Agreement to particularly guarantee the continuation of the electoral process and the organisation of the Presidential and Parliamentary elections, in accordance with the Malagasy Constitution and the electoral laws promulgated by the President of the Republic on 11 May 2018, following the decisions of the High Constitutional Court of 3 May 2018, relating to said laws. At the request of President

Hery and former President Rajoelina, Mr. Lamamra returned to Antananarivo from 27 May to 4 June 2018 and pursued his mediation efforts which finally resulted in a political consensus which made it possible to appoint a new Prime Minister, Head of Government, in the person of Mr. Christian Ntsay and the imminent formation of a new inclusive Government ending the crisis.

16. Within this context, the Assembly commends the African Union High Representative for “Silencing the Guns” on this progress and request the Government and all the Malagasy political actors to respect the arrangements thus agreed and contribute to creating conditions conducive for the organization of peaceful and credible elections. Furthermore, the Assembly may appeal to the bilateral and multilateral partners of Madagascar to provide effective support to the electoral process in that country.

17. The Comoros are experiencing a difficult political situation as a result of differences in views between the Government and the opposition on a number of political issues of the moment, particularly the organisation of the National Assembly, from 5 to 12 February 2018, the suspension of the Constitutional Court and the transfer of its powers to the Supreme Court by Presidential decisions of 12 and 13 April 2018, as well as the decision of the Government to convene the Electorate for 30 July 2018 to decide, by referendum , on the Draft Revision of the Constitution of 23 December 2001.

18. On 18 February 2018, the Chairman of the Union and the members of the Steering Committee of National Assembly (CPAN) presented the main Conclusions and Recommendations of the National Assembly in Mutsamudu, Anjouan. These include a Draft Constitutional amendment. It is important to note that the Chief executives of the Autonomous Islands of Anjouan, Grande Comore and Mohéli, members of Parliament and leaders of the opposition parties oppose this Constitutional revision because they believe that it calls into question, in particular, the autonomy of the Islands and all the gains recorded in the field of peace, security, stability, rotating Presidency and national reconciliation.

19. Within the framework of the efforts of the AU to find a solution to the crisis, Commissioner Chergui received, on 3 May 2018, an opposition delegation headed by former Vice President Mohamed Ali Soilihi. In the same context, the Chairperson of the AU Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, received, on 2 June 2018, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Francophonie, in charge of the Diaspora, of the Union of the Comoros, to discuss the latest developments in the situation in The Comoros. The Chairperson of the Commission then sent the High Representative on Silencing the Guns in Africa, Ramtane Lamamra, to The Comoros from 24 to 28 May 2018, for consultations with the Comorian stakeholders.

20. In this regard, the Assembly may reiterate the commitment of the AU to the Fomboni Agreement and the Comorian Constitution, urge the authorities of the Union to suspend the Constitutional review process and to favour dialogue and consultation on

this issue and to ask the AU Peace and Security Council to take up the Comorian issue again.

(ii) Greater Horn of Africa

21. Throughout the reporting period, the political, security, economic and humanitarian situation in **South Sudan** continued to deteriorate with an upsurge in fighting in most parts of the country. Within the framework of the ongoing revitalisation process of the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (ARCSS), the parties reached an Agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities, Protection of Civilians and Humanitarian Access (ACOH) on 21 December 2017. The Assembly, through its decision Assembly/AU/ Dec.677 (xxx), adopted during its last session held on 30 – 31 January 2018 expressed its deep concern over the repeated violations of that ACOH, and demanded full compliance by all parties. Despite this call, the Transitional Government of National Unity (TGoNU) and the armed movements continued their fighting, causing further loss of lives and displacements. The Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring Mechanism (CTSAMM) documented violations of the ACOH. On 8 February 2018, Council met and reaffirmed its determination to hold accountable violators of the ACOH. It, once again, urged the AU Commission, in consultation with IGAD, to develop and submit possible punitive measures that could be imposed on those impeding the peace process. On 26 March 2018, the IGAD Council of Ministers also met and decided, among others, to refer the ACOH violations to the PSC for appropriate punitive measures to be imposed. The TGoNU and the SPLM-IO were also urged to investigate violators and hold them accountable, and were given a 30 day period to report on progress to IGAD. At the time of finalizing this report, IGAD had not received any reports from the two parties.

22. In order to express solidarity with the people of South Sudan and engage the TGoNU and other stakeholders on the developments in the country, Council undertook a field mission from 4 to 9 April 2018, during which it held consultations with TGoNU and various stakeholders. It subsequently held its 768th meeting on 26 April 2018 during which it commended the efforts deployed by various actors through different initiatives in finding lasting peace in South Sudan, namely the IGAD-led HLRF, the National Dialogue launched by H.E President Salva Kiir and the reunification of the SPLM currently led by Uganda and Egypt and urged all stakeholders involved in those different processes to harmonize and coordinate their efforts with the view to converging all such initiatives in order to achieve peace and security in the country. The PSC further reiterated its readiness to consider taking the necessary steps, including sanction measures, that could ensure effective and efficient implementation of the ARCSS and renewed its request to the AU Commission to submit recommendations on possible punitive measures against those impeding the search for peace. It also requested the AU High-Level ad hoc Committee on South Sudan, the AU Commission Chairperson and the AU High Representative for South Sudan, with the support of the Chairperson of the AU, to intensify their engagement with the South Sudanese parties, in consultation with IGAD, with the view to enhancing support to the IGAD-led peace efforts.

23. Meanwhile, the IGAD-led High Level Revitalization Forum (HLRF) held its second session from 5 to 16 February 2018, and then again on 17 to 23 May 2018. It focused on the issues of governance and security in South Sudan. The mediators developed a Bridging Proposal based on the position papers presented by the parties. On 31 May 2018, the IGAD Council of Ministers met, with the participation of Commissioner Smail Chergui, and endorsed the Bridging Proposal. The Ministers also agreed that President Salva Kiir and Dr. Reik Machar should hold a face-to-face meeting, at the next IGAD Heads of State Summit meeting then scheduled for June 2018. Given the persistent and flagrant violations of the ACOH by the parties, the Council of Ministers also decided to seek authorisation to impose sanctions from the IGAD Assembly of Heads of State and Government on 21 June 2018. Subsequently, as mentioned above, the Assembly decided, for the Republics of Sudan and Kenya to further investigate the violation reports submitted by CTSAMM and JMEC and report to the next summit the appropriate targeted punitive measures to be taken.

24. The Assembly, may wish to commend IGAD efforts to revitalize the ACRSS and assist the parties to achieve peace and reconciliation. The Assembly may also wish to urge the parties to abide by their commitments, accept in good faith the bridging proposal and reaffirm its readiness for imposition of punitive measures against those obstructing efforts to achieve peace and reconciliation. The Assembly may wish to underscore the imperative of continued close coordination between the AU, IGAD and UN, and therefore call for consultations between the AU Ad Hoc Committee and IGAD for an active support to IGAD efforts. The Assembly may also commend the AU High Representative for South Sudan, Professor Alpha Oumar Konare, and the Chair of the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (JMEC), Mr. Festus Mogae, for their collective efforts towards the implementation of the ARCSS. The Assembly may further wish to welcome the continued efforts of Presidents Yoweri K. Museveni of Uganda and Abdel Fattah El-Sisi of Egypt to support the process of SPLM reunification.

25. Meanwhile, nominal progress has been made on the Two Areas of Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan in **Sudan**. The split within the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N) has further complicated the process. While the Government and the armed movements in Darfur continued to sign unilateral cessations of hostilities, there have been reports of violations of these commitments. From 2 to 4 February 2018, the AUHIP convened representatives of the SPLM-North and the Government of Sudan to continue their negotiations. Regrettably, the Parties were unable to reach an agreement, as the talks stalled on the question of humanitarian access. Nevertheless, on 4 February 2018, through a joint statement, the parties reiterated commitment to reaching a durable peace and to reconvene at the invitation of the Panel to complete negotiations on Cessation of Hostilities.

26. During the reporting period, the security situation in **Darfur** has remained relatively stable, with a major decrease in fighting between the Government of Sudan and the armed movements, as well as in inter-communal clashes across Darfur, except for some parts of the Jebel Marra area where a number of deaths were reported in May 2018. From 7 to 13 April 2018, the Commissioner for Peace and Security, Ambassador

Smail Chergui and the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for peacekeeping, Jean-Pierre Lacroix undertook a visit to Khartoum and Darfur for consultations with the Government and other stakeholders. Similarly, the PSC undertook a field mission to Sudan from 5 to 9 May 2018, to express its solidarity with the people of Sudan, particularly those in Darfur, and to assess the current security trends in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) area of operation. During these two visits, the delegations acknowledged the improvement in the overall security situation compared to the situation in the previous years. The Sudanese authorities and IDP's leaders emphasized the importance of early recovery and development support from both the Government and the international community. Meanwhile, on 18 May 2018, Council underscored the need for a gradual withdrawal of the UNAMID mission, while at the same time urging the Government to continue, through the residual committees of the Darfur Regional Authority (DRA), to intensify efforts towards addressing land issues, IDPs returns, reconciliation, peace building and addressing the root causes of conflict in Darfur. Council also urged, the Joint Special Representative to work closely with the Government of Sudan to ensure that there is enough international support for this key initiative.

27. Furthermore, a joint African Union-United Nations review team visited Khartoum and Darfur from 2 to 13 April 2018 and prepared a Special Report, for the Secretary General and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, covering the period 1 July 2017 to 15 May 2018. It provided a conflict analysis, depicting the current security situation and conflict drivers in Darfur, the political and humanitarian situation, as well as the development needs to avoid relapse into conflict. This report considered by the PSC and the UNSC on 11 June 2018, proposed a revised approach for Darfur, which includes a new mission concept with adjusted priorities for UNAMID as well as a transition concept in collaboration with the UN country team over a two-year timeframe to sustain peace in Darfur.

28. The Assembly may wish to commend both the Government of Sudan and UNAMID for their collaborative efforts to address the Darfur crisis. The Assembly may also wish to underscore the need for a gradual draw down process, taking into account the vulnerability of the local populations. The Assembly may also wish to urge the government to continue, through the residual committees of the Darfur Regional Authority (DRA), to intensify efforts towards addressing land issues, IDPs returns, reconciliation, peace building and addressing the root causes of the Sudanese conflict in Darfur.

29. The **relationship between the Sudan and South Sudan** remains stable, albeit with occasionally accusations from both sides alleging support of each other's armed rebel movements. Efforts to implement the Cooperation Agreement of September 2012 are continuing with the assistance of the African Union High Level Implementation Panel on Sudan and South Sudan (AUHIP). On 4 February 2018, the AUHIP convened the Joint Political Security Mechanism (JPSM) in an Extraordinary Session in Addis Ababa chaired by former President Abdusalami Abubakar, with high level participation of the Parties on the Joint. Border Verification Monitoring Mechanism (JBVMM). The JPSM

reached key decisions to address all of the concerns expressed by the Security Council relating to the JBVMM and its work. The Panel will continue to engage the parties to ensure the full implementation of these decisions within the determined timeframes as well as on Abyei related matters.

30. The Assembly may wish to encourage the AU Commission to continue its engagements with the governments of Sudan and South Sudan, to assist them build two viable states living side by side in peace. The Assembly may also wish to urge the two governments to implement their commitments as outlined in the 2012 Cooperation Agreement and the subsequent decisions of the JPSM.

31. The Federal Government of **Somalia** (FGS), under the leadership of President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed, has pursued an ambitious agenda that is registering major political and economic milestones while promoting relative peace across Somalia. The current relative peace across the country has been due to the increasing partnership between the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the Somali Security Forces. Utilizing the presence of AMISOM across south central Somalia has enabled the FGS to build on the political space, including through consolidation of the federal system and initiating essential political reforms.

32. The FGS's Political Roadmap, which was approved by Parliament in January 2018, sets out key milestones and specific timelines to achieve objectives before the end of 2020. Currently, the Government is making progress on preparing for universal elections in 2020, addressing the completion of the constitutional review with the start of its national constitutional convention, and consulting on complex issues related to political reconciliation, federalism, and power and resource sharing.

33. The FGS has begun to focus efforts on the development of a realistic conditions-based Transition Plan to transfer security responsibilities from AMISOM to Somali Security Forces. Since January 2018, through the Transition Core Group comprising, the FGS has led on planning and implementing the transition from AMISOM to the Somali Security Forces. The finalized Transition Plan has been widely well received in Somalia, including by the Council of Ministers and the Federal Member States (FMS). It was also endorsed by the 769th meeting of the Peace and Security Council, held on 30 April 2018 and by the High Level Security Meeting on Somalia in Brussels, on 2 May 2018.

34. It should be noted that Special Envoys, Ambassador Ramtane Lamamra, AU High Representative on Silencing the Guns, and Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, former UN Under Secretary General for Peacekeeping Operations, who had been appointed by the Chairperson of the AU Commission and the UN Secretary-General to explore the options available for the future funding of AMISOM, conducted their consultations with various key stakeholders, from January to April 2018 and finalized their report on 6 April 2018.

35. Pursuant to the Security Council Resolution 2372, the UN and the AU undertook a fourth Joint Review of AMISOM, from 11 to 17 May 2018, to take stock of the status of

the transition thus far, including the development of Somali security institutions, and to make recommendations on the progressive transition from AMISOM to Somali security forces, including during the electoral period, taking into account the capacities of the Somali security forces.

36. Somalia's economy continues to be on the path to recovery. Under the stewardship of Prime Minister Hassan Khaire, the FGS has instituted a policy framework and facilitative measures, anchored these measures on its National Development Plan (NDP), to improve the performance of the economy especially its financial sector. The NDP has been registering significant progress, which include the Government's performance on its second IMF – Monitored Programme (SMP), thereby successfully generating U\$42 million in domestic revenues - a target set by the IMF, which will open a pathway to debt relief. Additionally, Somalia's cooperation with other International Financial Institutions, such as the World Bank, has enabled progress on its fight against corruption and assisted in the regular payments of its civil servant salaries.

37. The FGS has seen an increase in Al-Shabaab defections, including high-level defectors, from its leadership ranks. This comes after the repeated offers by President "Farmaajo" of amnesty to Al-Shabaab fighters who renounce terrorist activities and embrace peace in the society. Due to the increasing numbers, FGS, in consultation with its Federal Member States (FMS), is developing a framework to address the possibility of large-scale defections from al-Shabaab.

38. Whereas there has been notable progress in Somalia, the FGS continues to face serious challenges, including the impact of the ongoing Gulf crisis, the volatile security situation in some parts of the country with Al-Shabaab attempting to exploit the spill-over of the Gulf crisis in the country to carry out indiscriminate attacks against the population, government officials, international workers, Somali Security forces and AMISOM personnel.

39. The Assembly may wish to welcome the Somalia Transition Plan, re-affirm the AU's support to the FGS in its transition implementation activities and commend efforts of the Chairperson of the AU Commission and Secretary-General in exploring options for funding AMISOM, through the respective Special Envoys, namely Ramtane Lamamra and Jean-Marie Guéhenno. The Assembly may further wish to request the UN Security Council to endorse the recommendations of the report of the AU-UN Envoys for predictable and sustainable funding for AMISOM and Somali Security Forces during the transition period and reiterate its call on the UN for AMISOM and Somali Security Forces to be funded predictably and sustainably from the UN assessed contributions.

40. There was a glimmer of hope on relations between **Ethiopia and Eritrea** following the recent announcement by the Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic of Ethiopia, H.E. Dr. Abiy Ahmed, that his Government would fully implement the Agreement between the Government of the State of Eritrea and the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia of 2000 also known as the Algiers Agreement, and accept the Decision of the Ethiopian Eritrean Boundary Commission (EEBC). This

was followed by the decision of President Isaias Afwerki of the State of Eritrea, on 20 June 2018, to dispatch a delegation to Addis Ababa for constructive engagement with Ethiopia. The AU, as one of the Guarantors of the Algiers Agreement, has remained committed to promoting dialogue between the two countries with a view to addressing all-outstanding issues that would culminate in the normalization of ties.

41. The Assembly may wish to commend the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia for its recent commitment to implement the Algiers Peace Agreement which it signed with Eritrea following the end of the war between the two countries and to “fully accept” the decision of the Ethiopian Eritrean Boundary Commission (EEBC). The Assembly may also wish to commend President Isaias Afwerki of the State of Eritrea for a courageous step that he has taken to open a new chapter of cooperation and good neighbourliness. The Assembly strongly urges the Government of Eritrea and Ethiopia, without delay, to create the necessary conditions for the full implementation of the Algiers Peace Agreement and the decision of the Ethiopian Eritrean Boundary Commission. The Assembly reaffirms its commitment to accompany the two parties in their efforts to normalize relations.

(iii) **Great Lakes Region**

42. At its 30th Ordinary Session, the Assembly urged the AU Member States with the requisite logistical capabilities to generously make them available to the **Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)** for the success of the electoral process and encouraged the AU, with SADC, ICGLR, and the United Nations to continue to pool their efforts for coherent and effective financial, logistical and security support to the DRC for the organisation of the elections. The Assembly had also expressed its full support to the efforts of the Chairperson of the Commission in the direction of the Congolese authorities, while urging the latter to take measures aimed at defuse the tension of the political life. The Workshop of Experts and the 20th Meeting of the Technical Support Committee of the Regional Oversight Mechanism (ROM), the Framework Agreement for Peace, Security and Cooperation for the DRC and the Region, jointly organised by the AU and the United Nations, in Addis Ababa, from 26 to 28 February 2018, to take stock of the implementation of the Framework Agreement and to identify possible measures likely to reactivate the Oversight process, were followed by the 758th meeting of the Peace and Security Council on 14 March 2018. Council reaffirmed its commitment to the implementation of the said Framework Agreement and noted the progress made in the preparation of Presidential and Legislative elections, scheduled for 23 December 2018. Council also welcomed the various initiatives taken by SADC, ECCAS, ICGLR and other Member States such as Gabon and Zimbabwe to support the dynamics in the prospect of elections in the DRC.

43. Since March 2018, a lull has set in and seems to be strengthening in the country. The high tensions that prevailed between January and February 2018, decreased sharply, making room for a general environment more conducive to the political game.

44. On the other hand, significant progress has been made in the electoral process, including the end of the registration operations at the national level. The Law on the determination and distribution of seats in the Parliament on the basis of the basis of constituencies was adopted by Parliament and promulgated by the President of the DRC, thereby entering into force. Nevertheless, the audit of the electoral register carried out by the International Organisation of La Francophonie (OIF), from May 6 to 25, 2018, revealed that 16.6% of voters, or 6,640,000 voters, were registered without fingerprints, while the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) had already struck out 6.8 million voters during the deduplication operation. In addition, a controversy arose about the voting machine introduced by the CENI but rejected by the opposition. Nevertheless, the CENI continues to insist on the use of this machine, which, in its opinion, is an element of rationalisation of the electoral process without which it would be forced to postpone the elections to April 2019. In addition, the rate of disbursement by the Government from the budget for the organisation of those elections, without external contribution, is delayed, which can impact on the deadlines set for the different preparatory phases of the elections.

45. With regard to the security situation, the reports regularly submitted by MONUSCO reflect a complex situation that could have a real impact on the organisation of the next elections, due to the political discourse held by some national armed groups. These Reports point to recurrent and new cycles of conflict and violence perpetrated by both national and foreign armed groups, the rise in inter-communal violence, acts of violence carried out by some militias in some regions of the country, as well as the deterioration of the humanitarian situation which reached catastrophic proportions in certain areas of the country. The number of Internally Displaced Congolese would have doubled to reach 4.49 million. The number of Congolese refugees fleeing the country is estimated at 714,000. At least 13.1 million Congolese need humanitarian assistance, of which more than 7.7 million are severely food insecure. It is in this alarming humanitarian context that an outbreak of Ebola fever was reported in Bikoro, Province of Ecuador, on 8 May 2018. As of 31 May 2018, 58 cases had been reported as against 27 deaths.

46. Within this context, the Assembly may welcome the remarkable efforts of the Congolese authorities, the CENI, SADC, ICGLR, ECCAS and other AU Member States and the United Nations in the preparations for the organisation of the next elections. It should renew its call for the mobilisation of the necessary support from the Member States for the success of the Presidential and Legislative elections of December 2018 in the Congo. The Assembly may also encourage the Congolese political and social actors to favour political compromises in order to preserve this dynamic conducive to peaceful electoral contests. In this regard, it may ask the CENI to take the necessary measures to operationalise the team of Electoral Experts dispatched by the AU and international partners so that the team could provide the assistance and the guarantees or insurance required regarding to the use of the voting machine. The Assembly may also urge full cooperation between the Congolese, MONUSCO and the Intervention Brigade with regard to operations to make the country secure and neutralise armed groups. Finally, the Assembly may show its compassion for the Congolese people in the face of the

Ebola outbreak and call upon the AU Member States to support the affected people and requests the PSC to remain actively seized with the matter.

47. The situation in the **Central African Republic (CAR)** did not witness much encouraging developments during the period under consideration. During the months of March, April and May 2018, violence increased in several provinces of the country but also in Bangui. The MINUSCA forces intervened on several occasions, notably at PK5, to dismantle the bases of so-called self-defence armed groups, which ransom traders. Since December 2017, an armed group such as the Nouredine Adam's Popular Front for the Renaissance of the Central African Republic (FPRC), has been particularly successful in setting his troops in motion to engage in hostilities on a larger scale or by uttering threats of attack, but which the group always denied.

48. It was in this context that the AU PSC and the Political and Security Committee of the European Union (EU COPS) undertook a joint mission to the CAR, on 7 and 8 March 2018, within the framework of enhancing cooperation and political dialogue between the two organisations, already manifested by a similar joint mission undertaken in Mali in February 2015. The Joint Mission made it possible to assess the particularly high volume of assistance needed by the CAR in order to build the resilience capacity of the country and remove the risk of instability.

49. The African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in the CAR has been the main focus of efforts of the AU and the Central African Member States. The Facilitation Panel of the Initiative carried out a second round of meetings, from 19 February to 1 April 2018, with the armed groups, the local administrative authorities and the representatives of the Civil Society. The Panel recognised the need for the Central African government to accelerate the DDR programme to which several armed groups looked forward as well as the redeployment of all the Prefectural authorities including their support in rolling stock and the rehabilitation of the administrative premises. From 30 April to 4 May 2018, in Addis Ababa, the Panel organised, with the support of the EU, a Retreat for the benefit of its members with a view to building their capacities in facilitation and peaceful management conflicts.

50. The Joint mission undertaken by the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, Ambassador Smail Chergui and the United Nations Under-Secretary General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix and the first meeting of the International Support Group for the Central African Republic (GIS-RCA), held in Bangui, on 11 April 2018, are also in line with the joint efforts of the AU and the United Nations but also ECCAS, for the stabilisation and reconstruction of the CAR.

51. The situation in the CAR obviously remains fragile, including the humanitarian situation. Within this framework, the Assembly may lend its full support to the Central African authorities in their efforts to restore order and authority throughout the territory, including in the overall reconstruction of the country. The Assembly may wish to condemn all acts of the armed groups in the country and reiterate its call to the armed groups to put a definitive end to their attacks, respect the elected and decentralised

authorities and unconditionally join the political process for the resolution of the current crisis. It should call upon the Member States of the Panel but also the other AU Member States to provide support for the implementation of the African Initiative.

52. The Assembly may also welcome the efforts of the international partners of the CAR, including the EU and encourage them to pursue their efforts, including redoubling their efforts in addressing humanitarian situation in the country, particularly of those in the IDPs camps. It may also commend the action of MINUSCA, while stressing the effective strengthening of the Mission as announced in November 2017. The Member States of the Central African Region may be called upon to make additional efforts to support the CAR.

53. Since the 30th African Union Summit, held in Addis Ababa, on 29 and 30 January 2018, the political **situation in Burundi** has continued to be a source of concern for the African Union, which pursued its efforts, in cooperation with the East African Community to support the Burundian parties in overcoming obstacles and resume the Dialogue after the impasse in Arusha in December 2017. Meeting in Kampala on 23 February 2018, on the occasion of their 19th Summit, the Heads of State and Government of the East African Community decided to continue their efforts to revive the Dialogue process. In response to this appeal, the Facilitator, former President Benjamin MKAPA, decided to convene the 5th round of negotiations in Entebbe from 24 to 28 April 2018. However, the Government of Burundi, in full preparation of the Constitutional Referendum, announced that it would not be available on the date indicated, which led the Facilitator to suspend his initiative.

54. At the security level, it should be recalled that the situation remained stable overall, even if the opposition continuously reported harassment, arbitrary arrests and threats to its supporters and to anyone who would advocate abstention or NO in the referendum. The campaign was actually opened on 1 May and ended on 14 May and the referendum was held on 17 May 2018. In general, the campaign went on without major incidents, except for the attack by a non a group, still not identified, during the night of 11 to 12 May at RUHAGARIKA Hill, in the BUGANDA Commune, Province of CIBITOKÉ, which left 26 dead and 7 wounded, according to the official record. During this period, the Government continued to release political prisoners, announced last year by the Head of State: thus, on 16 March, 740 prisoners, including 450 "demonstrators" of the events of 2015, regained their freedom. For its part, the opposition denounced the locking up of the official media, harassment, arbitrary arrests and threats. Two (2) foreign media, the BBC and the Voice of America (VOA), were suspended for six (6) months for lack of professionalism. Furthermore, the MoU relating to the deployment of Military Experts and Human rights Observers has not yet been signed.

55. After the announcement of the result of the Referendum, President NKURUNZIZA announced that he would not stand for Presidential election in 2020 and would support the next President.

56. With regard to the humanitarian and socio-economic situation, it should be noted that, at the beginning of April 2018, 1,600 Burundian refugees who had left a camp in the DRC for Rwanda were returned to their country of origin. It should be noted that Burundi, Tanzania and UNHCR have signed an Agreement to pursue the voluntary return of refugees to Burundi. The general socio-economic situation of the country remained fragile, within the framework of the sanctions imposed by the European Union against the Burundian authorities.

57. The Assembly may take note of the Statement of President Pierre Nkurunziza not to stand for the Presidential elections in 2020 and call upon the Government and all political actors to work together to promote an inclusive and consensual dialogue. The Assembly may request the Commission to support Burundi during this phase and contribute, with the East African Community and its Facilitator, H.E Mr. Benjamin Mkapa, to the success of the inclusive dialogue and the strengthening of democracy and observance of human rights in Burundi. The Assembly may also congratulate H.E Mr. Yoweri Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda and Mediator of the East African Community for the Inter-Burundian Dialogue. The Assembly may wish to commend the signing of Agreement between Burundi, Tanzania and the UNHCR regarding the return of the Burundian refugees. The Assembly may also call for lifting the sanctions imposed by the European Union on Burundi in order to alleviate the socio-economic plight in the country.

(iv) Western Africa and the Sahel

58. The situation in **Guinea-Bissau** has continued to be of major concern, notably during the 30th Ordinary Session held from 28 to 29 January 2018, in Addis Ababa, the Assembly called on the Bissau-Guinean stakeholders to implement the 2016 Bissau Roadmap and the Conakry Agreement, in order to resolve the crisis and ensure a successful and timely conduct of the 2018 legislative elections. The Assembly also underscored the primary responsibility of the President of the Republic to create conditions to promote inclusive and genuine dialogue and urged all stakeholders to refrain from actions that could further ignite the crisis. The Assembly further reiterated its support to the mediation efforts then being deployed by the ECOWAS in enhancing stability in Guinea-Bissau.

59. On 29 March 2018, in Addis Ababa, the 760th meeting of the PSC reiterated the Assembly's decisions and emphasized that the 2016 Conakry Agreement remains the primary framework for the peaceful resolution of the political crisis and called upon the Bissau-Guinean actors to abide by their commitments and implement the 2016 Bissau Roadmap and the Conakry Agreement. Furthermore, Council stressed that sanctions imposed by ECOWAS shall remain in force until the Conakry Agreement is fully implemented.

60. During the reporting period, the Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), convened on 14 April 2018 in Lomé, Togo, for an extraordinary summit and stressed, among other aspects, the need to fully

implement the Conakry Agreement. In this context, the President of the Republic José Mário Vaz reported that the parties reached consensus on some key aspects of the Conakry Agreement, including the nomination of Mr. Aristides Gomes as new Prime Minister. They also agreed on 18 November 2018 as the date for legislative elections. Subsequently, ECOWAS endorsed the consensus and extended the mandate of the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea-Bissau (ECOMIB) up to 30 June 2018.

61. On 16 April 2018, following the ECOWAS extraordinary Summit of 14 April 2018, held in Lomé, Togo, the President of the Republic, José Mário Vaz, dismissed the Prime Minister, Mr. Artur Silva, and replaced him with Mr. Aristides Gomes. Furthermore, on 19 April, the plenary of the People's National Assembly (*Assembleia Nacional Popular* (ANP)) elected all the National Elections Commission (*Comissão Nacional de Eleições* (CNE)) officials, extended the mandate of the legislature and endorsed 18 November 2018 as the date for legislative elections. On 26 April 2018, President Jose Mario Vaz swore in the new cabinet involving all political parties.

62. The Assembly may wish to commend the Bissau-Guinean leaders for adhering to the 2016 Conakry Agreement, demonstrating commitment to, and respect for the country's Constitution. The Assembly may also underscore that, while there has been some progress, it is imperative for Guinea Bissau to consolidate gains made thus far by acting in unity for the good of the country. The Assembly may further wish to reiterate its appreciation for the efforts deployed by AU, ECOWAS, CPLP, the EU and the UN towards addressing the Guinea-Bissau situation with a view to searching for a lasting solution to the crisis in Bissau Guinean.

63. The situation in **Mali**, during the period under consideration, was marked by the preparations for the forthcoming Presidential election. Under the Roadmap for Implementation of the Priority Actions Timetable, signed on 22 March 2018, the signatory parties to the Agreement agreed to the postponement of the Regional, Local and Communal elections. In this context, the Government of Mali took measures that met the exigencies of the entire political class and thus ensure peaceful elections. These include the adoption of a new electoral law and the audit of the electoral register. On 27 April 2018, the Government formally convened the electoral body for the Presidential election on 29 July 2018. With this prospect, the Chairperson of the AU Commission deployed, from 9 to 18 May 2018, a mission to pre-election observer mission to Mali.

64. The situation in Mali was also marked by the implementation of the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, issuing from the Algiers process. In this regard, progress was made, in particular with the parties signing a Roadmap for the Implementation of the Timetable for the Priority Actions, measures aimed at providing the interim authorities with the necessary means for their operation, the adoption of a law establishing the communities of Ménaka and Taoudénit, the taking up of office by the Independent Observer, the establishment of the Headquarters of the Coordination Operational Mechanism (MOC), based in Kidal, the provision of logistical means for capacity building of the Gao MOC, ongoing efforts for pre-registration of fighters eligible for DDR etc. It is also important to note the building of trust between the signatory

Parties, the recent visits of the Malian Prime Minister to Kidal and other regions of the North are an illustration of this trust.

65. However, important challenges remain to be taken up. These include the Constitutional Referendum, which has been postponed sine die, the delay in the start of the operationalization of the cantonment, integration and DDR process, the intensification of terrorist attacks, intercommunal clashes between Fulani and Dogon, as well as between the Fulani and Daoussaks, the deterioration of security in the north and in the centre, which leads to the multiplication of human rights violations, etc. It is important to stress that the parties to the Agreement are continuing their consultations with a view to managing the pending issues within the framework of the implementation of the Agreement. The Government is making efforts to redeploy the administration in the central part of the country to address the inter community clashes and the activities of the terrorist movements.

66. With regard to **the Sahel Region**, the situation was marked by the intensification of terrorist attacks in northern and central Mali, as well as in the border region between Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, especially against the civilians, the defence and security forces of the countries of the region and the international forces present in Mali, particularly those of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and the French *Operation Barkhane* as well as a proliferation of terrorist groups and other armed groups.

67. It is in this very particular context of Mali and the Sahel Region that the PSC, at its 759th meeting, held on 23 March 2018, considered the situation in Mali and the Sahel and the operationalization of the Joint Force of the G5 Sahel. Among other things, Council decided to extend the deployment of the G5 Sahel Joint Force for an additional period of twelve (12) months, as of 12 April 2018 and stressed the imperative need for building the capacities of the Defence and Security Forces of Mali, both in terms of training and equipment.

68. In March 2018, the African Union organised a Strategic Consultative meeting on the Sahel, with the main objective of assessing, with all its partners, the progress made and to prepare a more realistic roadmap for the Sahel Region. Sahel. Considering the difficulties faced in the implementation of the aforementioned Agreement in Mali, it is important that the AU and the international community strongly support the Malian electoral process for the organisation of consensual and peaceful local and part municipal, regional and Presidential elections. Given the serious nature and peculiarity of the situation in Mali and in the Sahel Region, a coordinated response at the regional, continental and international levels is necessary.

69. Progress has been made in the efforts aimed at operationalizing the **G5 Sahel Joint Force**. Specifically, there has been significant progress in the establishment of a Central Command Post of the Force, the effective launching by the Joint Force, in November 2017 and February 2018, of joint cross-border operations between Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, and the launching, in May 2018, of a joint operation by the G5

Sahel Joint Force contingents from Burkina Faso and Niger, with the objective of limiting the freedom of action of terrorist groups on an area of approximately 4000 km². These operations confirmed the operational capacity of the Joint Force, even though much remains to be done in this area.

70. However, it should be stressed that the Joint Force is taking too long to become fully operational particularly due to the lack of sustainable funding, equipment and logistics support and also the delay in the disbursement of the pledges made by the international Community, particularly by the International High Level Conference on the Sahel held on 23 February 2018 in Brussels. The G5 Joint Force Member States are currently depending on their own resources to undertake operations against the terrorist Groups.

71. In this Context, the Assembly may wish to welcome the progress made on mobilization and deployment of personnel in operationalizing the G5 Sahel Joint Force. The Assembly may wish to welcome the pledges made by different partners during the Brussels Conference and call upon them to honour their pledges and reiterate its appeal to the international community, in particular the United Nations Security Council, to take the appropriate decisions in order to ensure sustainable and predictable funding for the Joint Force. The Assembly may also wish to underline the commitment of the AU to help articulate a regionally-coordinated response within the framework of the Nouakchott Process, as well as other RECs on the enhancement of security cooperation on the Enhancement of Security Cooperation in the Sahel-Sahara region and further reiterate the need for a holistic approach to address the security, Governance and development challenges facing the region.

The Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) Against the Boko Haram Terrorist Group

72. The Boko Haram terrorist group has remained a serious regional security threat in the Lake Chad Basin. Driven by Violent Extremism (VE), it has continued to carry out Human and Vehicle Borne Improvised Explosive Device (IED) attacks against security forces and civilians in the regional countries of Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria. Boko Haram activities have not only led to the displacement of more than 2.3 million people but also has exposed over 20 million people in the affected areas to acute need of humanitarian assistance. The regional **Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF)** is currently conducting operation AMNI FAKAT to rid the Lake Chad islands of the terrorist group, in spite of its limitations regarding amphibious assets and air intelligence gathering means. Besides military operations, the MNJTF is conducting operations in order to win over the hearts and minds of the population susceptible to Boko Haram recruitment and to encourage Boko Haram militants to surrender. MNJTF operations have indeed resulted in degradation of Boko Haram capabilities and impeded its freedom of movement, reduced frequency of attacks, rescue of more than 21,000 abducted civilians, including the Dapchi school girls earlier abducted in Northeast of Nigeria. The development, particularly the swift rescue of the schoolgirls underscores the increasing operational capability of the Nigerian security forces, as well as increase

the confidence of the affected population on the ability of the MNJTF in general to ensure civilian protection in conflict situation. On its part, the AU continues to support the MNJTF operations with additional operational equipment, finances and human resource. The AU Partners, in particular, the European Union (EU), the United Kingdom (UK) and Turkey have provided financial and logistic support to the MNJTF. The AU is also supporting the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) in the formulation of holistic Regional Stabilization and Recovery Strategy for the Boko Haram affected areas.

73. The Assembly may wish to reiterate its commendation to the efforts deployed by the Lake Chad Basin countries, namely, Cameroon, Chad, Niger, Nigeria plus Benin in the fight against Boko Haram terrorist group through the MNJTF. The Assembly may also wish to commend the AU Partners for their contributions in the fight against the terrorist group. The Assembly may wish to appeal for further efforts towards mobilizing additional support for the MNJTF, in order to fill its capability gaps particularly, with respect to Amphibious Equipment and Counter-Improvised Explosive Devices (C-IED) equipment as well as resources for Quick Impact Projects. The Assembly may also recall the efforts of the Lake Chad Basin countries towards recharging the dwindling resources of the Lake Chad. In this regard, the Assembly may wish to welcome the International Conference on saving the Lake Chad, which took place in March 2018 in Abuja, Nigeria, and call on the international community to actively support the process of recovery of Lake Chad.

(v) Northern Africa

74. The 30th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union, held in Addis Ababa, in January 2018, expressed deep concern over the persistent political impasse and the security situation in **Libya** and its negative impact on the Libyan people, the country's institutions, and on security and stability in the neighbouring countries. The Assembly further stressed the importance of renewing and enhancing cooperation between the African Union, the neighbouring countries and the United Nations in the resolution of the Libyan crisis, with a view to reaching a broad consensus on the objectives to be attained.

75. It is against this background that the AU continued its engagement with Libyan stakeholders, and the Quartet for Libya (the African Union, the United Nations, the European Union, and the League of Arab States), as well as with the neighbouring countries. Towards this end, the AU High Level Committee on Libya convened, at the ministerial level, on 17 April 2018, and agreed to enhance cooperation with the United Nations with a view to reaching a broad consensus on actions to be taken and ensure effective coordination between the two organizations in support of efforts to find a durable solution to the crisis in the country. To bridge the differences among the Libyan stakeholders, the Committee also called for the convening of a Libyan National Reconciliation Conference under the auspices of the AU and the UN.

76. Overall, during the period under review, there was no marked improvement in the political developments in the country. The dialogue committees formed by the House of

Representatives and the High Council of States in September 2017, failed to make any progress in facilitating agreements by the Libyan parties on amendments to the Libyan Political Agreement (LPA) signed in Skhirat, Morocco on 15 December 2015. On its part, the UN has started its engagement in planning and preparing the process for the holding of parliamentary and presidential elections before the end of 2018. Towards this end, it is important to highlight the non-signed joint communique that was issued by Fayez al-Sarraj, Chairman of the Presidential Council of Libya and Prime Minister of the Government of National Accord; Ageela Saleh, President of the House of Representatives; Khaled Mishri, Head of the High State Council, and General Khalifa Haftar, Head of the Libyan National Army, at the conclusion of the Paris Conference, held in Paris on 29 May 2018. According to this document, presidential and parliamentary elections will be organized on 10 December 2018.

77. While the level of violence has reduced, especially in Tripoli, the overall security situation in the country remain fragile as was demonstrated by the bombing of the Headquarters of the Election Commission on 2 May 2018. The security situation in Sabha, in southern Libya, also remain a major concern, with increased proliferation of armed groups and criminal activities. There is also no improvement in the humanitarian situation in the country. In addition to the very difficult situation of African migrants in the camps under the control of armed militia, the fate of refugees and IDPs remains of great concern as the response of the humanitarian agencies to their needs is far from the expected level. The security and humanitarian situation is also compounded by the continued illegal unregulated flow of arms and ammunition into the country, contravening relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

78. Against this background, the Assembly may take note of the efforts made at the regional, continental and international levels to change the situation in Libya with the aim of promoting national reconciliation and carrying out successfully the ongoing transition in Libya and welcome the organisation of meetings on Libya by neighbouring countries, the Quartet, the United Nations (UN) and other partners. It may approve the Conclusions of the Ministerial Meeting, held in Addis Ababa, on 17 April 2018 and welcome the convening, under the auspices of the United Nations, of the International Conference on Libya, on 29 May 2018 in Paris. In this regard, the Assembly may take note of the commitment of the Libyan leaders to implement the Conclusions of the International Conference on Libya, particularly the respect of deadlines for the establishment of a constitutional basis, the adoption of electoral laws, the organisation of Legislative and Presidential elections, as well as a Political Conference open to all. The Assembly may furthermore call for the organisation of an inclusive Inter-Libyan National Reconciliation Forum, under the auspices of the United Nations and the African Union, in August 2018, with a view to establishing the conditions conducive to the organisation of credible and peaceful elections. To this end, it may invite the United Nations, the African Union to pursue their close coordination on the issue and to mobilise the necessary support for the organisation of this Forum. Finally, the Assembly may once again express its appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Denis SASSOU N'GUESSO, President of the Republic of the Congo, Chairman of the AU High Level Committee on Libya, for the continued efforts for the restoration of a definitive peace in Libya.

(vi) Western Sahara

79. the PSC recalls Assembly/AU/Dec.653(XXIX), taken at the Twenty-Ninth Ordinary Session of the Union held from 3 to 4 July 2017, in Addis Ababa, in which the Assembly urged the Chairperson of the AU Commission, , in consultation with the AU PSC, to take appropriate measures (including the possible revitalization of the Committee of Heads of State decided in 1978) to support the efforts of the UN and encourage the parties, both of whom are now member states of the AU, to cooperate in good faith towards ensuring the success of the new process and also requested him to report to the Assembly on the measures and initiatives taken in partnership with the UN. The PSC also recalls Assembly/AU/Dec.677(XXX) taken at the Thirtieth Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union held from 28 to 29 January 2018, in Addis Ababa.

80. During this reporting period, the UN Secretary General Personal Envoy, President Horst Kohler, has continued his dialogue and consultations with the two parties and neighbouring countries. According to the report of the UN Secretary General S/2018/277 dated 29 March 2018, the Personal Envoy met on 25 and 26 January the Secretary-General of Frente Polisario in Berlin. Consultations addressed in depth the political, socioeconomic and humanitarian dimensions of the conflict and the situation on both sides of the berm. The Personal Envoy met with Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Morocco in Lisbon. He also met Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Mauritania and of Algeria in Berlin. Consequently, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 2414 (2018), which renewed MINURSO's mandate only for six months, until 31 October 2018, recognized that the status quo is not acceptable, and that progress in negotiations is essential in order to improve the quality of life of the people of Western Sahara in all its aspects. In this regard, the Council called upon the two parties to resume negotiations without preconditions and in good faith, with a view to achieving a just, lasting, and mutually acceptable political solution, which will provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara in the context of arrangements consistent with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations while noting the role and responsibilities of the parties in this respect.

81. In implementing the mandate assigned to him by the Heads of State and Government during the 29th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union, held on 3 and 4 July 2017, the Chairperson of the Commission held consultations with the two Member States, neighbouring countries, as well as other African countries in the search for a resolution of the conflict in conformity with the international legality. In this regard, the Chairperson visited the Kingdom of Morocco on 5 and 6 June where he held consultations with the King of Morocco and the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation. He then visited the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) on 19 and 20 June and met with the President of SADR and Minister of Foreign Affairs. He also visited Algiers from 11 to 12 March 2018 and met with the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Algeria, then visited Nouakchott on 27 March 2018 where he met with the President of Mauritania.

82. The Chairperson will present a report on his consultations to the Assembly on 1 July 2018 in Nouakchott.

B. THEMATIC ISSUES WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AFRICAN PEACE AND SECURITY ARCHITECTURE

a) Development of the ASF and the harmonisation of ACIRC

83. The 30th Ordinary Session of Assembly on 28-29 January 2018 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, endorsed the Report on the Verification, Confirmation and Validation of the African Standby Force (ASF) pledged capabilities undertaken by the commission from 19 April – 31 Oct 2017. The Report provided details on the state of readiness of Regional Standby Forces, pursuant to Assembly decision /AU/Dec.589 (XXVI) of January 2016, and confirmed that the ASF is ready for deployment upon mandating by the PSC or the Assembly. In this context, Assembly/AU/Dec.679 (XXX), as adopted by the 30th Ordinary Session of the Assembly, calls on *all stakeholders to support the realisation of the full operationalization of the ASF, and harmonise the activities of ACIRC with the Framework of the ASF and enhance cooperation with all ad-hoc coalitions namely, MNJTF, Group of Five Sahel Joint Force and RCI-LRA. In this regard, the Assembly urged the PSC to continue mandating and deploying the ASF for AU Peace Support Operations, including the use of ad-hoc coalitions, in line with the AU Constitutive Act.*

84. In pursuance of decision Assembly/AU/Dec.679(XXX), the Commission briefed the PSC during its 767th Meeting held on 25 April 2018 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on the steps taken to further on the operational readiness of the ASF and noted the recent deployments of regional peace support operations of the ASF type deployments by SADC in Lesotho and ECOWAS in The Gambia. The Commission further noted that these deployments highlights the need for: harmonised and coherent political decision-making and mandating processes between the PSC and the RECs/RMS policy organs; more clarity on deployment modalities between these two sides, including adequate consultation and involvement of the RECs/RMs in decision-making on peace and security.

85. The Commission plans to convene the RECs/RMs policy organs and technical bodies to review the draft MoU Legal Framework between the AU and the RECs/RMs on the deployment and employment of the ASF. The draft Legal framework will subsequently be submitted to the PSC for consideration. The Commission has also finalized Commission-wide consultations on the scope and content of the new PSO Doctrine and ASF Concept.

86. The Commission has taken steps to mobilise, develop and establish the capacity to employ and deploy the ASF, using the Strategic lift. The strategic lift concept and its implementation plan was reviewed in order for it to meet the ASF requirements in line with the Revised Maputo Five Year Work plan (2016 – 2020). The Commission continues to operationalize and strengthen the Continental Movement Coordination

Center (CMCC) and set up the Regional Movement Coordination Centers in consultation and coordination with the RECs/RMs. During the period of reporting, the Commission visited and held consultations with EASF, NARC and ECOWAS and ECCAS to assess the strategic lift capacities these RECs hold or can mobilise to deploy their forces or support other RECs to deploy the ASF. The Commission is also in consultations with our partners to look at options available outside the continent. The Commission is scheduled to visit and hold consultations with SADC in July.

87. On harmonization of ACIRC activities with ASF framework, ACIRC activities have been incorporated to the revised 5 year Maputo Work Plan and synchronized it with ASF in a more integrated and systematic manner. On the enhancement of cooperation between ASF and Ad Hoc Coalitions, namely MNJTF, the G5 Sahel Joint Force, the Commission has continued to provide strategic and technical support to these ongoing Peace Support Operations.

88. It is planned for ACIRC to participate in the ASF activities, including Training exercises and availing its logistics bases for use by ASF. The Commission also plans to launch the drafting and the consultative phases of the AUPSO Doctrine and ASF Concept development process in which the ACIRC concepts may be considered. The Commission will continue to make progress in enhancing its IHL, Human Rights and Conduct and Discipline Compliance Framework by submitting the related policies to the next STCDSS for endorsement.

89. In light of the foregoing, the Assembly may wish to direct that, in line with the implementation of Assembly/AU/Dec.679(XXX) and PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCLXVII), quarterly briefings by RECs/RMs be made to the PSC on conflict situations in their regions, in line with Articles 12 and 16 of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the PSC of the AU. This is to ensure joint AU-RECs/RMs strategic and political agreement, decision making and engagement on key issues. Secondly, the holding of regular exchanges between the PSC and the relevant organs of the RECs/RMs, on the enhancement of the ASF and its Rapid Deployment Capability and implementation of other joint initiatives. The Assembly may also direct that quarterly updates be given by the Commission, to the PSC on the harmonization of the activities of QCIRC and enhance cooperation with G5 Sahel joint force, MNJTF and RCI-LRA, with a view to ensuring a common understanding of the actual status of the operationalization of the ASF and its Rapid Deployment Capability, in line with Assembly/AU/Dec.679(XXX). The Assembly may wish to request the Commission to engage with the RECs/RMs to expedite finalization of the Draft ASF Legal Framework and all other necessary policy documents, which will facilitate harmonized AU-RECs/RMs political decision-making and mandating process for the ASF and AU Peace Support Operations in the continent.

b) Revitalization of The Peace Fund

90. Indeed, it should be noted that the redoubling of AU efforts to decisively address peace and security challenges is most demonstrated by the renewed effort to revitalize the AU Peace Fund as the key component of the APSA. The January 2018 AU Summit

adopted the Peace Fund instrument based on the governance and management structure endorsed by the Peace and Security Council, the AU Executive Council and the AU Assembly in 2017. Following the adoption of the Instrument, the governance and management structures of the Peace Fund are in the process of being established, including the establishment of the Board of Trustees to oversee the operationalization of the Fund governance and management structures.

91. The current status of Member State financial contributions to the Peace Fund is \$45.5m, which represents the highest level of Member State contributions ever made since the Fund was established in 1993. It should be noted that 28 AU Member States made their contributions to the Peace Fund in 2017, in advance of the establishment of the agreed governance and management structures. This is a clear signal of the rising level of political will and commitment to implement the Kigali Decision on the Peace Fund. The target is to have the full \$400m Peace Fund endowment in place by 2021. The Peace Fund drive is expected to enable the AU to deliver on the AU Assembly's 2015 decision to finance 25% of its peace support operations budget, as well as other key operational peace and security activities.

92. Furthermore, the High Representative of the Chairperson of the Commission for Financing the Union and the Peace Fund, Dr. Donald Kaberuka, has continued with his efforts to further mobilize support and resources with a view to achieving the AU required predictable and sustainable financing for AU mandated authorized peace support operations and the peace fund. It was in this context that the High Representative undertook a mission, from 4 to 8 June 2018, to hold consultations with senior officials of the European Union, France and the United Kingdom. Notably, and ultimately it remains a strategic goal of the Africa and the AU, as the prime continental organization to secure access to UN assessed contributions to buttress peace efforts in Africa.

c) Enhancing Partnership between the AU and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs)/Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (RMs)

93. During the period under review, steps have been taken in continuation of the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Cooperation in the area of Peace and Security, signed between the AU and the RECs/RMs in Addis Ababa, on 28 January 2008. The AU and the RECs/RMs have also been implementing the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) Roadmap (2016-2020) adopted in 2015, with a view to enhancing their coordination and promoting core synergy in their actions in the peace and security domain. The RECs/RMs Liaison Offices to the AU have ensured continued participation on behalf of their respective RECs/RMs in the activities of the AU. Based on the initiative of the Chairperson of the Commission, efforts are underway towards rationalizing AU Liaison Offices through the establishment of regional bureaus, with a view to scaling up the visibility of the AU on the ground where African citizens are, while at same time economizing on the use of financial and human resources.

94. At the time of finalizing this report, plans were very advanced to convene a meeting of Senior Officials of the AU and the RECs/RMs, to among other aspects, review the status of implementation of the 2008 MoU between the AU-RECs/RMs and possible amendments, and discuss funding of APSA beyond December 2018, when the European Union (EU) APSA Support Programme III will come to an end.

95. On its part, and in implementation of its working methods and enhancement of partnership with the RECs/RMs, the Peace and Security Council has been inviting RECs/RMs to attend its meetings, for those concerned with issues on the agenda of PSC meetings. This is in accordance with the decisions adopted in past PSC Retreats, and in particular the PSC's Retreat with the RECs/RMs held in Abuja, Nigeria, on 14 to 16 September 2015 meetings, which called for a stronger role for RECs/RMs in providing inputs to the PSC decision-making process. Furthermore, in its various meetings, the PSC has consistently encouraged the RECs/RMs to enhance efforts for conflict prevention and resolution in their respective regions.

96. Aside the issue of national elections in Member States, the Commission, through the Department of Political Affairs, collaborated with RECs/RMs on a number of initiatives aimed at conflict prevention, management and resolution. Two of these initiatives are worth noting in respect of free movement of persons. Following the adoption of the Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons, the Commission and RECs/RMs have embarked on popularization of the Protocol leading to its signature on thirty-three (33) Member States and ratification by one (1) Member State so far. The Commission and RECs/RMs are currently working with Chiefs of Immigration from Member States to finance the guidelines on the design, production and issuance of the African passports.

97. In respect of provision of humanitarian assistance, the Commission and RECs/RMs are implementing the African Common Position on Humanitarian Effectiveness, particularly the establishment of the African humanitarian Agency (AHA). The PSC, at its 762nd meeting held on 9 April 2018, welcomed the establishment of the African Humanitarian Agency, as the Africa's new humanitarian architecture, as a basis for appropriate and effective humanitarian action on the continent. The PSC emphasized that this Agency should be operational as from January 2019, while stressing that the operationalization of the Agency should be undertaken within the overall framework of the reform processes of the AU.

d) Preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism

98. The African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT) continues to conduct trainings to develop and strengthen national capacities for countering **terrorism and violent extremism**. In collaboration with the Kofi Annan International Peace Training Centre (KAIPTC), the Center has developed a 10-day training course on Human Security Approach to the prevention and combating of terrorism and violent extremism. The ACSRT is also assisting Namibia, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Côte d'Ivoire in developing national strategies on preventing and

countering terrorism and violent extremism and actions plans. In addition, the Centre is providing support to the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) in developing their regional strategies.

99. The Commission, in partnership with the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, in its capacity as the Champion on Combating Terrorism and Violent Extremism in Africa, held in Algiers on 9 and 10 April 2018, a High-Level Meeting on Combating Terrorist Financing in Africa. The meeting was held in pursuance of Communiqué PSC/AHG/COMM.(CDLV) adopted by the Peace and Security Council at its 455th meeting held at the level of Heads of State and Government in Nairobi, Kenya, on 2 September 2014. The meeting, which brought together senior officials from AU Member States, relevant AU entities, institutions with a mandate of combating terrorism and illicit financial flows, and the United Nations, came up with recommendations to be implemented at national, continental and international levels, aimed at strengthening the technical, institutional and policy frameworks in combating terrorist financing.

100. On its part, the African Union Mechanism for Police Cooperation (AFRIPOL) Secretariat is in the process of establishing Groups of Experts on cybercrime, prevention and combating of terrorism and counter-transnational organized crime with the mandate to provide technical and policy guidance to the Secretariat and other relevant AU entities, including on how best to work with the private sector. AFRIPOL is working with the Member States of the North Africa region to establish the Northern Africa Regional Police Cooperation Organization as a regional mechanism to strengthen and facilitate police cooperation among the countries of the region.

101. Furthermore, AFRIPOL has initiated the process for installing the African Police Communication System (AFSECOM) in all Member States to enable secure and timely sharing of information and data on criminals and their organizations. Additionally, and in order to effectively combat all forms of transnational organized crime, AFRIPOL is entering into memorandums of understanding and cooperation agreement with police cooperation organizations globally.

e) Post-conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) Policy Issues

102. During the period under review, the AU Commission finalised, in February 2018, a five-year **Results-Based Framework on PCRD** to serve as an additional tool for the monitoring and evaluation of AU's PCRD efforts. In this regard, the Commission undertook several Post-Conflict and Reconstruction related activities in certain countries and regions of the continent. In **Somalia**, the AU Commission undertook an evaluation of the Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) that were implemented by the Africa Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) in 2017. The projects were for the provision of clean and safe water to the Out-Patients Department community within the AMISOM Base Camp; provision of hospital requirements for Ayuub Community Health Centre in Mogadishu; and renovation and equipment of Caterpillar Police Station in Kismayo. These projects play important role in demonstrating AU Solidarity for the civilian population, generating

local support for AMISOM and enhancing the Mission's credibility through practical contribution on the ground.

103. In support of the ongoing democratic transition in **The Gambia**, the Commission undertook a pre-deployment mission to Banjul in February 2018, to finalise the Terms of Reference of the AU Technical Support Team to The Gambia (AU TSTG). The Commission is due to deploy ten (10) members of the AU TSTG, in July 2018, comprising six Senior Military Officers, one Senior Rule of Law Expert, and three Human Rights Experts to Banjul to support The Gambia's Security Sector Reform and Transitional Justice.

104. In June 2018, AU Commission supported the **Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC)** and its member countries to finalise and validate the Regional Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience strategy for the areas affected by the activities of the Boko Haram. It provided funding to the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF) to implement QIPs for the construction of classroom and administration blocks in Mora, Baga Sola, and Diffa; provision of clean and safe water in Sola Baga and Diffa; and construction of a Maternity Ward in Diffa.

105. **Liberia** continues to consolidate peace and democracy following the peaceful transfer of power from one democratically elected government to another on 22 January 2018. The mandate of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) came to an end on 30 March 2018, with the departure of UNMIL staff. The UN Country Team (UNCT) headed by a Resident Coordinator, H.E. Yacoub El Hillo, has assumed responsibility for UN support for development activities in the country. In this regard, it is necessary for the AU Member States and the international community at large to extend their support to post-conflict reconstruction and development activities in Liberia.

106. The Assembly may wish to direct the scaling up of funding for QIPs in Somalia as they are likely to assume greater importance in generating peace dividends and building local confidence. The Assembly may also wish to re-affirm its support to the ongoing reforms in The Gambia. The Assembly may further wish to commend efforts of the LCBC to stabilise the Boko haram-affected areas and call on the AU Member States as well as international partners to extend the necessary financial and technical assistance to support the implementation of the Strategy. Assembly may further wish to call upon Member States and RECs/RMs to scale up funding in support of AU's PCRD efforts to stabilise countries emerging from conflict or difficult transitions.

f) Efforts towards Conflict Prevention

107. As part of the Commission's renewed emphasis on conflict prevention and early warning, various steps and initiatives have been taken in this context aimed at preventing the outbreak, escalation and relapse of conflicts on the continent.

108. The Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) has continued to provide timely information on potential threats to peace and security on the continent through the

production of early warning reports, and regular Horizon Scanning Briefings, as well as the conduct of Breakfast Briefings by the Commissioner for Peace and Security to the PSC Member States. Two Breakfast meetings between the Commissioner and the members of the PSC were also held during the reporting period.

109. Progress has been made in the implementation of the Continental Structural Conflict Prevention Framework (CSCPF) of the Commission, as part of efforts to support Member States in their endeavor to sustain peace and build resilient and prosperous nations. The Commission has continued to provide support and technical assistance to the Republic of Ghana, in the conduct of the Country Structural Vulnerability and Resilience Assessments (CSVRA), which will culminate in the development of concrete medium to long-term Country Structural Vulnerability Mitigation Strategies (CSVMS). CEWS has also continued to enhance the technical capacity of Member States for conflict prevention, through the establishment and strengthening of national early warning systems, including in the Republic of Ghana, Namibia and the Republic of Uganda. A meeting with CSOs from the East and Horn of Africa countries was held from 10 to 11 May 2018, with the objective of facilitating the effective and systematic participation of CSOs in early warning and conflict prevention and harnessing their contributions in the area of peace and security. In addition, CEWS has, in collaboration with the Department of Political Affairs (DPA), relevant RECs, CSOs and other stakeholders, embarked on an election situation project, which facilitates the effective monitoring of electoral developments in member states, with a view to initiating risks of election-related violence. A pilot workshop to identify hotspots and develop specific electoral indicators was conducted in Bamako, Mali, from 11 to 12 May 2018. The indicators would be regularly monitored and analyzed to inform decision makers of strategic options for response, where necessary.

g) Regional Security Coordination Mechanisms

110. It should be recalled that at its 455th meeting on Terrorism and violent Extremism held in Nairobi, Kenya, on 2 September 2014, at the level of Heads of State and Government, the Peace and Security Council (PSC) encouraged the establishment, where required, of flexible and action-oriented processes for intelligence sharing and security cooperation at regional level. In this regard, the Commission has been engaging the Heads of Intelligence and Security Services (HISS) of the Sahel-Sahara and Horn and East of Africa regions through the Nouakchott and Djibouti Processes respectively, in order to facilitate intelligence information sharing.

111. During the reporting period, the Commission organized the 5th meeting of the Heads of Intelligence and Security Services (HISS) of the Djibouti Process for the Enhancement of Security Cooperation between the countries of the East and Horn of Africa region, as well as the launch of the East Africa – Liaison and Fusion Unit (EU-FLU) in Entebbe, Uganda, on 23 May 2018. The meeting facilitated the sharing of intelligence information and institutionalized cooperation through the establishment of the EU-FLU.

h) Regional Peace and Security Strategies

112. The Commission has continued its efforts to develop a comprehensive and integrated approach to peace and Security in Africa, and provide a strategic framework for AU's actions in the various regions. In this context, on 28 and 29 March 2018, the Commission convened a strategic consultative meeting on the Sahelo-Sahara region, in Nouakchott, Mauritania, in an effort to review existing strategies, assess their implementation and agree on a comprehensive and integrated strategy for the region.

i) Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) and Security Sector Reform (SSR)

113. In Somalia, the AU deployed 2 SSR experts in early 2018 to assist with the transition from peace enforcement to stabilization. The Commission is also in the process of deploying an SSR advisor in Mali to further strengthen the capacity of MISAHEL in supporting the implementation of the relevant provision of the Algiers Accords. In Lesotho, the AU is preparing the SSR and other components of the AU support requested by SADC.

114. The Commission made submissions to the UN-led global Mapping of Multilateral Approaches to SSR, held on 14 March 2018 in Brussels, and participated in the UN High – Level Round Table on SSR and Sustaining Peace, held on 23 April 2018 in New York. The Commission also took part in the UN Inter-agency SSR Practitioners Workshop, held on 13-14 June 2018 in New York. AU Permanent Representatives were variously engaged in SSR issues with the United Nations and the International Security Sector Advisory Team (ISSAT) in New York and in Geneva, respectively, during this period.

115. In pursuance of efforts to develop a Regional Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience Strategy for the Lake Chad Basin (LCB), the Commission, in collaboration with the LCBC and the United Nations, convened the workshop on the *screening, prosecution, rehabilitation, and reintegration of persons associated with Boko Haram*, on 10-13 April 2018 in N'Djamena. The objective of the workshop was to identify current procedures and practices among states in handling persons associated with Boko Haram and identify measures to streamline practices and ensure their compliance with regional and international frameworks and standards on DDR and human rights and in a manner that contributes to encouraging defections and stabilizing the region.

116. In Somalia, the Commission has initiated consultations with the Defector Rehabilitation Program (DRP) to identify the scope of support to be provided in establishing a database and information management system for disengaged combatants in order to ensure proper recording of information at reception centers, processing and evaluation.

j) Controlling the illicit proliferation, circulation and trafficking of small arms and light weapons

117. During the reporting period, support was provided to Malawi within the context of the AU Ammunition Safety Management Initiative. An inception and stakeholder consultation workshop was held on 19 March 2018 in Lilongwe, bringing together mid and senior level officials from the Malawi Defence Force and Police Service. The workshop provided a platform to sensitize participants on national obligations pursuant to the regional and international frameworks, as well as identify and discuss national progress, gaps and challenges. Subsequently, technical assessment missions were undertaken on 20-23 March 2018 to several ammunition storage areas across the country to determine the conditions of the storage facilities and ammunition, level of human capacities available, and the applied accounting and oversight practices. The aim is to provide risk mitigation recommendations and longer term safety and security enhancement suggestions, as well as assist in securing the resources required to address the identified needs.

118. In pursuance of efforts to develop a policy for the management of recovered arms and ammunition in Peace Support Operations, an expert's level meeting was held on 19 April 2018 in Addis Ababa, bringing together Defence Attaché's of AU Member States and troop-contributing countries (TCCs), AU peace support operations, sub-regional and international organizations, and other subject matter experts met to discuss the scope and contents of the proposed policy. The meeting reviewed the proposed outline of the draft policy and discussed measures to ensure the applicability and feasibility of the policy while aiming to achieve acceptable standards in dealing with the challenges at hand.

119. In preparation for the 3rd Review Conference of the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its Aspects (UN-PoA), scheduled for mid-June 2018, the Commission took part in the regional preparatory meetings convened by the United Nations on 10-13 April 2018 in Lomé. The meeting provided an opportunity to highlight the synergies between the PoA, regional instruments and the AU Master Roadmap, as well as encourage strong and principled participation of AU Member States in the conference.

k) Weapons of Mass Destruction Disarmament and Non-proliferation

120. Developments of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and the international community ability to deal with them within the framework of a global multilateral order has raised serious concern. The PSC at its 763rd meeting held on 10 April 2018, stressed that these developments have had wide reaching consequences and threatened regional stability and friendly relations among nations. The PSC further stressed that the slow pace of nuclear disarmament and the rising tensions among nuclear-weapon possessor states is undermining confidence in the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and increasingly diminishing prospects in further reduction of nuclear arsenals. In this regard, the PSC underscored the need for the implementation

of the UNSC resolution 1540 (2004) which seeks to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and related material to non-state actors, and to submit timely report on their efforts in line with the provisions of the resolution.

l) Pelindaba Treaty

121. The 4th Ordinary Session of the Conference of States Parties to the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Pelindaba), was held on 14-15 March 2018 in Addis Ababa. The session considered the report of the African Commission on Nuclear Energy (AFCONE) for the period 2014-2017, reviewed and adopted its rules of procedure, and adopted several decisions to address the current administrative and financial challenges preventing the full operationalization of its Secretariat. The session further adopted the proposed program of work and budget for the phase 2018-2020.

m) Activities of the Panel of the Wise

122. During the period under review, the 4th AU Panel of the Wise was inaugurated in October 2017 and appointed H.E. Hifikepunye Pohamba, former President of the Republic of Namibia, as its Chair. In pursuance of Article 11 of the PSC Protocol, as well as the Modalities for the Functioning of the Panel of the Wise (PoW), the Panel held its 18th statutory meeting in Windhoek, Namibia, on March 2018, under the Chairmanship of H.E. Hifikepunye Pohamba. At the meeting, the new Members of the PoW considered the possibility of extending their preventive diplomacy missions beyond countries preparing for elections to support the AU's efforts at implementing its Structural Conflict Prevention initiatives, including the Continental Structural Conflict Prevention Framework (CSCPF) and the AU Border Program (AUBP), as well as popularization of AU legal and normative instruments relating to conflict prevention. Furthermore, Panel Members agreed on a number of countries for deployment, and received a briefing on the status of the two thematic reflections currently being developed; natural resource-related conflicts and irregular and forced migration from Africa.

123. Moreover, the members of the Panel of the Wise devoted considerable effort in the operationalization of the FemWise-Africa (Network of African Women in Conflict Prevention and Mediation), in fulfilment of the decisions of the PSC meeting held on 13 March 2017, and subsequently endorsed by the Assembly in July 2017. In this regard, and under the guidance of FemWise Co-Chairs, the Panel networked with other similar international structures and finalised key documents for the functioning of the Network. In May 2018, FemWise began the accreditation process for new members by launching an open online application procedure. Subsequently, on 29 May 2018, FemWise held its 2nd Steering Committee meeting where, among other things, agreed on approving the new members of the network and agreeing on operational deployments. As part of the implementation of the FemWise initiatives, the Department organized, on 18 and 19 June, a two-day induction training event to new members of FemWise, under the title "Induction Training on Preventive Diplomacy and Mediation".

n) African Union Border Program (AUBP)

124. The AUBP has continued to provide support to an increasing number of Member States in the delimitation and demarcation of their interstate boundaries, as part of the Commission's structural conflict prevention efforts. The program continues to provide a platform for the negotiated resolution of border disputes and the promotion of regional and continental integration through cross border cooperation. During the reporting period, the AUBP provided technical assistance in the establishment of the Joint Committee on Cross Border Cooperation, at the district level, between Malawi and Tanzania. Technical assistance was also provided to the Riparian States of Lake Tanganyika in order to delimit the Lake; assistance to Niger and Chad to revitalize their Joint Border Commission; technical assistance in the border demarcation efforts of Mozambique and Zimbabwe, and Namibia and Zambia. Moreover, the AUBP has provided technical assistance in the marking of the crossing corridors in the Safe Demilitarised Border Zone between South Sudan and Sudan. In an effort to promote the AU flagship program of silencing the guns by year 2020, empowerment of women and free movement of people on the border areas, the Commission celebrate the African Border Day on 7 June 2018 at the border between Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

125. In addition, efforts have been deployed to mobilize the ratification of the AU Convention on Cross-Border Cooperation.

o) Humanitarian Situation

126. Conscious of the crucial importance of the of the humanitarian situation of the refugees and internally displaced persons in Africa, the Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU) devoted its 775th meeting, held on 22 May 2018 as an open session on the theme : «Principles for the Protection of Civilians in Conflict Areas in Africa ».

127. Council stressed the need to ensure the protection of all civilians and their properties against attacks and the direct consequences of military operations as well as the refugee and internally displaced persons camps and the civilian facilities maintain their civilian nature so that they are not deviated from their objectives by the parties to the conflict. Council stressed that all the PSOs, including those of the Sub regional coalitions authorized by Council should comply with the AU Principles on the Protection of Civilians and ensure a greater observance of the International Humanitarian Law, human rights, the Code of conduct and discipline. Council encouraged the Member States to disseminate, domesticate and internalize all the existing AU instruments relating to the Protection of Civilians in Conflict situations and ensure that they be considered as an integral part of the training of all the Defence and Security Forces in order to prepare the participation in the future AU PSOs

p) Conduct of the Comprehensive Study on the Implementation of the APSA from 2002 to the Present and Status of Reform of the PSC

128. It should be recalled that during its review of the peace and security situation in Africa in 2016 and 2017, the PSC expressed the need for the undertaking of a Comprehensive Study of the Implementation of the African Peace and Security Architecture from 2002 to the present (2018), to integrate a review of the implementation of the African Governance Architecture since its addition in 2012 to the present. In its reviews, the PSC became deeply concerned with the persistence of some of the old conflicts and crises, the outbreak of fresh ones in some parts of Africa, as well as the rise of new threats to peace and security, particularly terrorism, violent extremism, maritime crimes, and climate change impacts, among others. The Study is, therefore, intended to provide lead proposals on how to further strengthen the implementation of the APSA and the AGA, and at the same time enhance the effectiveness of their institutions within the vision to end conflicts/crises in Africa.

129. Furthermore, and where in the position taken by the PSC was further reinforced, the Assembly of the African Union, at its 28th meeting held in January 2017, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, adopted decision Assembly/AU/Dec.635(XXVIII), in which it decided that “*the Peace and Security Council (PSC) should be reformed to ensure that it meets the ambition foreseen in its Protocol, by strengthening its working methods and its role in conflict prevention and crisis management*”. At the time of finalizing this report the said Study had already reached its final stage. It is planned to hold a Retreat of the PSC to deliberate on the outcome of the Study.

IV. CONCLUSION

130. The period under review has witnessed relentless efforts in apply the potentials offered by the African Peace and Security architecture (APSA) and the African Governance Architecture (AGA) to prevent conflicts/crises, as well as resolve the existing ones. The PSC, in collaboration with the RECs/RMs, with the support of the Commission, has continued to consolidate the gains made in expanding and extending the frontiers of peace, security and stability, including the strengthening of PCRCD efforts in the continent. However, these peace efforts have not been spared by challenges. Terrorist activities, allied with violent extremism, organized transnational crime and trafficking of all sorts, have continued to ravage parts of the continent. The effects of climate change have also brought further suffering to some parts of Africa. However, and so remarkably, the continent remains determined to overcome these challenges and win the milestones called for in AU Agenda 2063, particularly, the imperative to build a conflict-free Africa with requisite conditions for constant socio-economic transformation process.

131. In this context, it is a fundamental necessity that, given the interdependency between them, the issues of security and socio-economic development in Africa should be practically pursued concurrently with a view to promoting sustainability and durability. The AU Organs, in implementing their respective mandates, have consistently upheld

the nexus between security and development to ensure a peaceful and developed Africa. In relation with the AU theme of year, the PSC at its 764th meeting, held on 12 April 2018, exchanged views with the African Union Advisory Board on Corruption on the relationship between corruption and conflict with a view to realizing Africa's goal of a conflict-free, integrated and developed continent. This requirement is informed by the fact that the ultimate vision in the APSA and the AGA is simultaneous attainment of durable peace; security of the state; security and material wellbeing of each African citizen, as well as the safety in the overall physical environment. Additionally, the Peace and Security Department has been focusing on conflict prevention through preventive diplomacy and provision of support to countries emerging from conflicts through post-conflict reconstruction and development programs to avert relapse into violence. Furthermore, whilst migration within the African continent substantially contribute to sustainable development, the spontaneous or unregulated migration nevertheless possess some challenges for the States, most notably the direct impact it has on national and international security and stability, including border related issues. In this respect, there is need to maintain the African common position on migration and development, and adhere to the intergovernmental negotiations to lead to adoption of a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration.

132. Lastly, the strengthening of the role of the PSC in the Continent cannot be achieved without an inclusive socio-economic development placing the African citizen at the centre of the Pan-African Agenda, as articulated by the founders of the Organization of African Unity, now succeeded by the AU, which has put in place Agenda 2063.

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