



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **AU-RECs-CSOs Planning Retreat on Gender, Peace and Security Programme concludes with a formulation of a Joint Annual Work Plan for the Year 2016**

**DebreZeit, 11 December 2014-** The Commission of the African Union (AU) in collaboration with the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), concluded a three-day Planning Workshop on Gender, Peace and Security Programme (GPSP) at Kuriftu Resort in DebreZeit, Ethiopia. This workshop, which is a follow-up to the workshop held in Accra from 7 to 9 May 2014, reviewed the progress made since the launch of the GPSP in June 2014, fine-tuned the 2015 work plan and formulated a joint annual work plan for the year 2016, to better coordinate programmes on Gender, Peace and Security.

The Workshop, which brought together representatives from the RECs/RMs, CSOs, and experts working in the field of Gender, Peace and Security in Africa as well as, Gender focal points from the AU Commission, aimed to enhance coordination of Gender, Peace and Security activities within the Commission, between the Commission and the RECs/RMs and Regional CSOs and strengthen the partnership on dialogue and research on Gender, Peace and Security.

During the three-day, participants reiterated the need to integrate Gender into the continental peace and security agenda; reviewed lessons learnt and identified challenges in the implementation of their joint activities since the launching of the programme in June 2014. Additionally, the participants reviewed the political and security landscape of the forthcoming two years to identify impending threats.

This review led to the formulation of adequate responses including the need to urgently step-up women's involvement in conflict-prevention and mediation initiatives. Recommendations were also made for enhancing the capacities of RECs-RMs to monitor progress and results under the Programme. Participants welcomed the Commission's initiative and the AU Summit preparations to celebrate 2015 as the year of the empowerment of African women.

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2014-12-11

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Peace and Security

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