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UNIÃO AFRICANA

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, P.O. Box: 3243 Tel.: (251-11) 5513 822 Fax: (251-11) 5519 321
Email: situationroom@africa-union.org

PRESS RELEASE

CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN THE AFRICAN UNION AND THE STATE OF QATAR ON PEACE AND SECURITY ISSUES

Addis Ababa, 24 November 2015: As part of the African Union (AU) efforts to enhance partnership between the AU and members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), an AU delegation led by the Commissioner for peace and security, Amb. Smail Chergui, met today, in Doha, with Qatari officials, including Prince Sheikh Abdul Rahman Bin Saud Al Thani and Mr. Ahmed bin Abdullah Al-Mahmoud, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs. The AU delegation included former President Pierre Buyoya, AU High Representative for Mali and the Sahel and Head of the AU Mission for Mali and the Sahel (MISAHEL), Ambassador Francisco Madeira, Special Representative for Somalia and Head of the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), and Ambassador Abdelhamid Bouzaher, Head of the AU Permanent Observer Mission to the League of Arab States.

The consultations with the Qatari authorities focused on various peace and security issues of common interest, including the Darfur region of Sudan, Libya, Somalia and Mali, as well as on the threat posed by the scourge of terrorism and violent extremism, against the backdrop of renewed terrorist attacks both in Africa and outside the Continent. The two parties exchanged views on how best to address the challenges at hand, including enhanced support to the AU and its Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution towards the implementation of the African Peace and Security Agenda. In this respect, steps will be taken to formalize the partnership between the AU and the State of Qatar, notably through the conclusion, as soon as possible, of a Memorandum of Understanding in the area of peace and security.

Commissioner Chergui seized the opportunity of the meetings with the Qatari officials to reiterate the AU's appreciation of Qatar's invaluable support to the search for peace in the Darfur region of Sudan, including financial contribution to help address the plight of the affected populations and facilitate rehabilitation, early recovery and development. These efforts and those of the AU, through the High-Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP), are mutually-supportive and aim at assisting the Sudan overcome the challenges confronting it.

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