



PRESS RELEASE

AU Commission holds 2nd Conference of the African Union Police Strategic Support Group to enhance the police and policing in African Governance, Peace and Security Architectures

Addis Ababa, 5 December 2016: As part of ongoing concerted efforts to facilitate the growth and development of African Union (AU) police and policing within the framework of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and the African Governance Architecture (AGA), the Commission of the African Union (AU), organized the Second Conference of the Police Strategic Support Group (PSSG), from 28 November 2016 to 2 December 2016, at the AU Headquarters, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The PSSG is a strategic advisory body that is designed to provide strategic and technical advice, as well as support to AUC on all matters relating to the police and policing in APSA and AGA including peace support operations (PSOs) and other special operations (SOs) mandated or authorized by the Peace and Security Council or the Assembly of the AU. The Conference, held under the theme, *“Africa Agenda 2063 for The Africa We Want: Consolidating the Police and Policing in Support of the Rule of Law and Good Governance for Public Safety and Security, Human Rights, Access to Justice and Sustainable Economic Development of Africa”* was organized in partnership with African Union Development partners namely the GIZ African Union Office /GIZAUO, the Institute for Security Studies /ISS Training for Peace/TfP, programme and the United Nations.

The conference brought together representatives of Member States, Heads of Police Components from the AUC, United Nations, African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), Heads of PSOs from the RPLANELMs, senior police experts from AUC, AMISOM, RPLANELMS, the United Nations, GIZAUO, ISS/TfP, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Kofi Anan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC), Norway, Denmark and British Peace Support Team for East Africa, amongst others.

The objective of Conference was to enhance understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the police and policing as a function of governance and the rule of law in PSOs and SOs. Furthermore, the PPSG-2nd Conference aimed towards familiarizing Heads of PSOs and Police Components of the Regional Planning Elements (RPLANELMs) and representatives of Member States with various strategic guidance materials for the police and policing in PSOs and SOs, which the PSSG developed, to facilitate their successful implementation and to develop modalities for the verification of the African Standby Force (ASF) police standby capabilities pledged by Member States.

Opening the conference, the Commissioner for Peace and Security, Ambassador Smail Chergui, highlighted the important roles and responsibilities of the police as a substantive player in both APSA and AGA. *“The police perform cross cutting policing functions of governance responsible for internal security, prevention, detection and investigation of crime, facilitation of access to justice, protection of life and property, maintenance of law and order, as well as public safety and security”*, the Commissioner noted.

During its deliberations, the Conference made key observations on progress made since the Maiden Conference of the PSSG held in 2014, as well as outstanding key structural challenges facing the police and policing in APSA and AGA. In this respect, the Conference made substantive recommendations on key decisions and strategies that need to be taken and implemented to address the outstanding key structural challenges. The Conference re-emphasized and underscored the added advantage of the police and policing matters of governance, peace, security and their full participation in key decision-making processes of APSA and AGA. *‘Leveraging on the added advantage of the police and policing in APSA and AGA is key to addressing the complex dynamics of contemporary intra-state conflicts, as well as emerging conflict trends and threats in Africa’*, said Police Commissioner Crowd Chirenje, Police Coordinator of the Peace Support Operations Division (PSOD) of the AUC.

In his closing remarks, the Head of the PSOD, Mr Sivuyile Bam, stressed on the need to mainstream the police in AU PSOs and SOs, to ensure their full involvement in the review and development of PSO and ASF doctrines. *“The police, civilian and military cannot work alone; they have to work in an integrated manner”*, Mr Bam stated.

The Conference concluded with a detailed Report that contains observations and key recommendations, to be submitted to the next meetings of the relevant Organs for endorsement and adoption considerations.

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