

**10<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL JOINT CONSULTATIVE MEETING OF THE PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL OF THE  
AFRICAN UNION AND THE POLITICAL AND SECURITY COMMITTEE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA  
17 NOVEMBER 2017**

**AU PSC/EU PSCAJCM.10**

**JOINT COMMUNIQUE**

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On 17 November 2017, the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (AU PSC) and the European Union (EU) Political and Security Committee (EU PSC) held their **10<sup>th</sup> Annual Joint Consultative Meeting** in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, as part of their regular dialogue within the framework of the Africa - EU partnership. The meeting was co-chaired by Ambassador Cherrif Mahamat (Chad), Chairperson of the AU PSC for the month of November 2017, and Ambassador Walter Stevens, Permanent Chair of the EU PSC. The Joint Meeting brought together Ambassadors of EU Member States and AU PSC Member States, as well as Senior Officials from the AU Commission, the EU External Action Service and Commission.

The Joint Consultative Meeting was preceded by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Joint Retreat of the AU PSC and the EU PSC, held on 16 November 2017, which provided the platform for an informal exchange on post-conflict reconstruction and development; sustainable financing of the AU-led peace operations authorised by the United Nations (UN) Security Council and enhancement of AU /EU cooperation on peace and security, as well as on migration.

The retreat reaffirmed the AU-EU strong partnership on peace and security. In this regard, the Retreat welcomed the need to strengthen the relationship between the AU and EU and agreed on the principle of developing a framework document, which will put our partnership, on peace and security on a more solid and structured basis, taking into account the more complex and new threats. They underlined the importance of strengthening the trilateral cooperation between the AU, EU and UN. The Retreat emphasized the importance of inclusivity in building sustainable peace, security and development with the involvement of women, youth and vulnerable groups. They also underlined the need to focus in future meetings on conflict prevention which is better than investing in conflict management. On migration, the importance of a well coordinated and comprehensive approach was underlined.

The discussion during the Joint Consultative Meeting focused on conflict and crisis situations in Africa namely, Somalia, South Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, Guinea Bissau, Sahel/Mali, Lake Chad Basin and Libya.

On **Somalia**, the AU PSC and the EU PSC reiterated their condemnation of the terrorist attacks and their condolences to the people of Somalia. They noted that the country is undergoing a critical security and political phase. Despite a peaceful second political transition, with the assistance of the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), the overall situation remains fragile, characterized by the continued security threat posed by Al Shaabab. In this regard, the two organs stressed the importance of sustained international support to the Government of Somalia and AMISOM. They recognized that AMISOM has been essential for the achievement of peace and security in Somalia and its support to the state building phase in Somalia remains critical. They emphasized the need for timely and predictable support, in particular, logistical and financial support to AMISOM during the transition phase in line with UNSCR 2372/17 and stressed the need to establish a responsible and conditions-based transition strategy of AMISOM. The AU PSC commended the longstanding and continued support provided by the EU to AMISOM and emphasized the importance of international burden-sharing.

The AU PSC and the EU PSC congratulated the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) for the adoption of its National Security Architecture (NSA) with a clear developmental trajectory for its national security institutions and forces, in which the Somali National Security Forces (SNSF) are expected to gradually take over security responsibilities from AMISOM starting in 2018. They stressed the importance of the Somali federal government in close collaboration with the federal member states to start the concrete implementation of the NSA and emphasized the need of all partners in Somalia to coordinate their support in enhancing the capacity of the FGS to start taking greater responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security in the country with due caution to ensure that the momentum achieved and gains made are not lost. Furthermore, they emphasized the need to enhance and facilitate the provision of humanitarian assistance to the affected population.

On **South Sudan**, the AU PSC and the EU PSC expressed their deep concern over the deteriorating political, security and humanitarian situation in the country. They noted with regret that all signatory parties to the Agreement on the Resolution to the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (Agreement) and new armed groups continue to wage war in clear violation of the ceasefire arrangements. They deplored the fact that the civilian population continues to suffer and that many have been forced to flee the country to seek refuge in neighbouring countries while others have sought protection in internally displaced persons (IDP) camps. They expressed strong support to the convening of the High Level Revitalization Forum for the implementation of the Agreement in December 2017 by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). They called on all stakeholders to fully support inclusive and genuine participation in the Revitalization Forum. They expressed readiness to use all means to increase pressure on the parties in absence of progress.

The AU PSC and the EU PSC expressed disappointment over the slow progress with regards to the National Dialogue, launched in May 2017. In this respect, they called for a more inclusive, genuine and transparent National Dialogue in the search for peace, security and stability in South Sudan. They further urged for the speedy and full deployment of the Regional Protection Force in order for it to carry out its mandate to protect civilians under threat, as well as ensure unhindered humanitarian access. The AU PSC and the EU PSC reaffirmed their commitment to continued engagement in support of the South Sudan peace process, and therefore agreed on the need to actively consider imposing appropriate measures against all those impeding the peace process. They called for the speedy establishment of the Hybrid Court of South Sudan and full cooperation of TGoNU on designing, implementing and facilitating the work on the transitional justice mechanisms as provided for in the ACRSS including the prompt establishment of the Commission for Truth, Reconciliation and Healing, and the Compensation and Reparations Authority as provided for by the Agreement. Furthermore, they commended the countries of the region which continue to host South Sudanese refugees.

On the situation **in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)**, the AU PSC and the EU PSC reaffirmed their commitment to lasting peace, security and stability in the DRC and the Great Lakes region as a whole. They welcomed the publication, on 5 November 2017, by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) of the electoral calendar, which has set 23 December 2018, as the date for the holding of presidential, legislative and provincial elections in the DRC that should lead to a democratic transition. They urged the DRC 2

authorities and all other Congolese political and social actors to implement the electoral timetable and to work resolutely towards reaching a broad consensus that makes it possible to organize democratic, credible and peaceful elections, in accordance with the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, and respecting the inclusive spirit of the Political Agreement of 31 December 2016. The AU PSC and the EU PSC recognize this as the only viable option for a successful transition towards elections in line with the Constitution. They underlined the need for the DRC to establish conditions conducive to the organization of elections meeting the deadlines as set on 5 November 2017 and further urged the Congolese authorities to enhance confidence-building measures, including inclusive dialogue among all stakeholders. This includes the urgent implementation of confidence building measures ("mesures de decrispation") agreed in the Political Agreement of 31 December 2016. They encouraged the Government of the DRC to allocate the necessary resources based on a credible budget and to initiate discussions with partners willing to provide financial, logistical and technical support to the electoral process in the DRC. They pledged AU's and EU's commitment to the international team of experts that will work to assess and accompany the electoral process according to international standards.

The AU PSC and the EU PSC expressed their deep concern over the prevailing security and humanitarian situation which has resulted in a new wave of refugees to the neighbouring countries and a sharp increase of IDPs over the past year, including in the Kasai provinces and Eastern DRC, with the continuation of abuses and human rights violations against the civilian population. They reaffirmed their common commitment, with all Stakeholders and Guarantors, to ensure the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC and the Region, signed on 24 February 2013, in Addis Ababa.

The AU PSC and the EU PSC reiterated their support for the United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Congo (MONUSCO) for its tireless efforts to promote peace, security and stability in the DRC, despite the challenges related to the reduction of its personnel and logistics and urged it to continue to support the authorities and institutions of the DRC, notably with regard to the successful organization of elections in the country.

The AU PSC and the EU PSC expressed deep concern at the deteriorating security and humanitarian situation **in the Central African Republic (CAR)** and reiterated their support to President Touadera and his Government in their ongoing efforts towards a comprehensive political solution, including justice and reconciliation. They strongly condemned the destabilizing activities of the armed groups, as well as targeted attacks against civilians and the troops of the UN Multidimensional Integrated Mission for Stabilization in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA). In this context, they welcomed the adoption of UNSCR 2387 (2017) that enhanced the Mission force. They reaffirmed their full support to the implementation of the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in CAR, with the support of the countries of the region, including the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), Angola, Chad, Congo and Gabon, as the framework for the promotion for lasting peace, security and stability in CAR. They underlined the importance of timely progress of the African initiative and called on all Central African stakeholders, the UN and other partners to support this process. They called upon all armed groups in CAR to cease hostilities and to commit themselves resolutely to the DDR programmes and the pacification process of the country.

They welcomed the Roadmap for Peace and Reconciliation in the CAR adopted in Libreville, in July 2017, supported the work of the Facilitation Panel as provided for in the Roadmap, which held its first meeting in Bangui, on 11 and 12 September 2017. They commended the EU for its support to efforts being made by the CAR authorities to restore peace and rebuild their country. In this respect, they welcomed the Donors Conference held in Brussels on 17 November 2016, spearheaded by the EU, which provided the opportunity to mobilise over 2.2 billion US dollars for the financing of the

Peacebuilding Plan and reconstruction in the CAR that generated great hope. They underscored the role of the EU military training mission (EUTM) in the training of new FACA. The AU PSC and EU PSC agreed to undertake a joint field mission to the CAR from 28 February to 1 March 2018 in order to assess the political, security and humanitarian situation in that country.

On **Guinea-Bissau**, the AU PSC and the EU PSC expressed their deep concern over the persistent political and institutional crisis in the country. They agreed that this political uncertainty threatens the stability and democratic future of the country and continues to paralyse the functioning of the Institutions. They commended the mediation efforts deployed by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) with the support of the AU, UN, EU, Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP), which led to the signing of an Agreement on 14 October 2016, in Conakry, Guinea (The Conakry Agreement), and the implementation of a roadmap aimed at ending the political crisis facing the country, and they raised concern about the lack of progress. The AU PSC and EU PSC called on all the key political players in Guinea Bissau to engage in good faith to promote a sustainable political solution, to ensure creation of an environment conducive for the holding of legislative election in 2018 and presidential elections in 2019, in full respect of the Constitution. Furthermore, the AU PSC and the EU PSC underlined the importance of redoubling efforts in mobilizing additional financial resources to support the continuation of ECOWAS Mission in Guinea-Bissau (ECOMIB) operations in Guinea-Bissau, especially in view of the upcoming legislative elections. They appealed to the partners of Guinea Bissau, including the UN, to continue to provide support for a peaceful and consensual solution to the political crisis in that country, within the framework of the Conakry Agreement.

On the situation **in Mali and the Sahel**, the AU PSC and the EU PSC expressed their deep concern over the deteriorating security and humanitarian situation in the north and centre of the country which has a dire impact on the security in the Sahel region. The AU and EU PSC expressed disappointment over the slow implementation of the Peace and Reconciliation Agreement in Mali over two years after its signature, and stressed the Agreement is the only framework that can make it possible to achieve lasting peace and reconciliation in Mali. They urged the signatories to overcome their differences and redouble efforts with a view to expedite the implementation process of the Agreement. In particular, they called for the urgent agreement by the parties on a credible and firm timetable for the implementation of the provisions of the Peace and Reconciliation Agreement and concurred on the need to see the speedy and full operationalization of the Operational Coordination Mechanism and the Mixed Patrols in Kidal and Tombouctou in order to facilitate the work of the interim authorities and the return on refugees and displaced persons. They also called for concrete progress in the areas of SSR and DDR, on Reintegration of former combatants, and on the transitional justice and human rights provisions of the Agreement. They praised the role of Algeria as head of the Mediation efforts and as Chair of the Comite de Suivi (CSA),

as well as the excellent cooperation on the ground between the AU High Representative for Mali/Sahel and the EUSR Sahel. They urged the Malian authorities to work towards a large consensus with a view to enable the country to organize peaceful and transparent elections, in particular the presidential and legislative elections in 2018, and confirmed their willingness to assist the Malian government in preparing these, including by sending election observation missions.

The AU PSC and the EU PSC expressed deep concern at the continued extension of terrorist activities **in the Sahel region**, underlining the spillover of terrorist attacks from Northern to Central Mali and the Border between Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso. They firmly condemned the terrorist attacks against the civilian populations, the Malian and international forces of the UN Multidimensional Integrated Mission for Stabilization in Mali (MINSUMA) and the *Operation Barkhane*. They conveyed their regret about the high number of casualties due to terrorist attacks among the civilian population and the armed and security forces of Mali and the countries in the region, including MINUSMA, *Barkhane* and

EUTM Mali personnel. In this respect, they reiterated their support to MINUSMA and called for further means and capabilities for the Mission so it can deliver its mandate in a safe manner. The AU PSC and EU PSC reaffirmed their strong partnership in support of regional security and development in the Sahel. They saluted the contribution to these efforts made by the EU Training Mission (EUTM) Mali and EU Capacity Building Mission (EUCAP) Sahel Mali.

They commended efforts by the G5 Sahel and ECOWAS to reinforce regional cooperation to address the threats of terrorism and organized crime. They welcomed the timely initiative of countries of the G5 Sahel, under the mandate of the AU PSC and with strong EU support, to establish a Joint Force to combat terrorism, transnational organized crime and all traffics in the region. They welcomed in this regard, the AU PSC communique of 13 April 2017 endorsing the Concept of Operation of the G5 Sahel Joint Force, as well as the resolution 2359 (2017) of the UN Security Council welcoming the initiative. They commended the EU's pledge of 50 million Euros to support the G5 Sahel Joint Force and called for additional support for the operationalization of the Joint Force by the international community and highlighted the importance of the forthcoming Sahel Conference in Brussels to this end. In this context, they agreed to base the AU-EU joint response on the principle of applying an integrated approach of security, stabilization and development as illustrated by the establishment of the Alliance for the Sahel.

On **Lake Chad Basin (LCB)**, the AU PSC and the EU PSC commended the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) and the national security forces of the countries of the LCB region for their collective efforts in the fight against the Boko Haram terrorist group, whose operational strength has been degraded, while upholding international human rights standards and international humanitarian law. The EU financial support to this force was appreciated, while it was agreed to seek better cooperation mechanism, including on political priorities, identified needs and financial oversight. They expressed their concern over the very dire humanitarian situation in the region, mainly caused by Boko Haram activities, as well as the effects of climate change, which require an urgent response from the international community. They welcomed the holding of a Lake Chad Basin Regional Stabilisation Conference, held in N'Djamena on 2-4 November 2017 and underscored the importance of a coordinated and comprehensive effort to tackle the post-conflict challenges,

in particular early recovery, local governance and issues of Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration, Repatriation and Resettlement (DDRRR) of disengaged Boko Haram fighters in the LCB region. In this regard, noting the substantive contribution already provide by the EU, they committed to continue to provide financial, technical and other necessary support to the region, including to the Lake Chad Basin Commission and the AU Liaison Office in N'Djamena, to support the total elimination of Boko Haram terrorist group and elevate the population standard of living.

On **Libya**, the AU PSC and the EU PSC noted with concern that the current situation in Libya - which has manifested in persistent political deadlock and overall insecurity- is further exacerbating the already precarious humanitarian situation. They further noted the persistent difficulties in the political dialogue in spite of encouraging engagements between the members of House of Representatives (HoR) and the High State Council. They expressed support for the work and central role of the new UN Special Envoy for Libya, Mr. Ghassan Salame and commended the efforts of the AU High Level Committee on Libya. In this regard, the AU PSC and the EU PSC called for more efforts among Libyan stakeholders to bridge the political divide and the need for these stakeholders to urgently undertake an all-inclusive national reconciliation process. They called upon all members of the Quartet on Libya, namely, the AU, through the High Representative and the High Level Committee on Libya, including the neighbouring countries, the EU, the UN, and the League of Arab States (LAS), to continue to use the framework of the Quartet to enhance coordination of their activities and to organize as soon as possible a fourth meeting of the Principals. The AU PSC and the EU PSC underlined the important support provided to the Libyan institutions through the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)

mission, European Union Advisory Mission (EUBAM) Libya and European Union Naval Force Mediterranean (EUNAVFOR MED) Operation Sophia. They also acknowledged the sustainable programme of assistance that the EU is providing to mitigate the suffering of Libyan population and to assist stranded migrants.

The AU PSC and the EU PSC agreed to undertake the 2<sup>nd</sup> joint field mission in the Central African Republic in February or March 2018.

The AU PSC and the EU PSC agreed to meet again in 2018 in Brussels, Belgium.