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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, situationroom@ausitroom-psd.org

PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
178TH MEETING
13 MARCH 2009
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/Comm(CLXXVIII)

COMMUNIQUE

**COMMUNIQUE OF THE 178TH MEETING OF
THE PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL**

1. The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 178th meeting held on 13 March 2009, continued the exchange of views that started at its 172nd meeting held on 24 February 2009, on the report of the African Union /United Nations Panel of Experts on the modalities for supporting African Union peacekeeping operations in the light of the presentation [(PSC/PR/2(CLXXVIII)) by the Commission.
2. Council recalled decision Assembly/AU/Dec. 222(XII) adopted by the Assembly of the Union at its 12th Ordinary Session, held in Addis Ababa from 1 to 3 February 2009, and requesting Council to meet as early as possible to review the Report of the African Union - United Nations Panel on Modalities for Support to African Peacekeeping Operations and submit its input prior to the consideration of the said report by the United Nations Security Council.
3. Council also recalled decision Assembly/Dec.145 (VIII) adopted by the Assembly of the Union at its 8th Ordinary Session, held in Addis Ababa from 29 to 30 January 2007, and requesting the United Nations, to examine, within the context of Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, the possibility of funding, through assessed contributions, peace-keeping operations undertaken by the AU or under its authority and with the consent of the United Nations. Council further recalled its earlier communiq  s and statements on the cooperation between the AU and the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security, in particular the document adopted at its 98th meeting held on 8 and 23 November 2007 and the press statement issued at its 152nd meeting held on 7 October 2008.
4. Council stressed that the United Nations Security Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security; that regional arrangements, in particular the African Union, have an important role to play in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations; and that support by the United Nations to the regional organizations in matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security are an integral part of collective security as provided for in the Charter of the United Nations.
5. Council emphasized the important role that Africa play in the promotion of peace, security and stability through troop contribution, political management of conflict and crisis situations and provision of financial and logistical resources.
6. Council stressed that the report of the African Union - United Nations Panel marks an important step in the overall efforts to enhance the capacity of the AU to meet the peace and security challenges facing the continent and to mobilize greater support within the larger international community. Council commended the Chair of the Panel and its members for their efforts.

7. At the same time, Council underlined the need for continued efforts to ensure predictable, sustainable and flexible funding for AU-led peace support operations, building on recent initiatives and developments in this respect, including but not limited to the 2nd Africa Peace Facility (APF), established by the European Union (EU) at the request of the AU for the period 2008-2010 and which comprises an early response mechanism to support preparatory steps of African led peace support operations; and the provisions of Security Council resolution 1863 (2009) of 16 January 2009 regarding the logistical support package to the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), to be funded through UN assessed contributions, and the establishment of a trust fund to allow funding to be channeled to AMISOM.

8. Council recognized the importance of a more effective strategic relationship between the AU PSC and the UN Security Council, to enable both organs to exercise their respective comparative advantages. To this end, Council expressed support to the proposal for a joint strategic assessment made in the report of the Panel. In the meantime, Council underlined the need to ensure a more regular interaction between the Chairperson of the PSC and the President of the Security Council, as well as closer coordination and better synchronization between the Security Council and the PSC in terms of decision-making.

9. Council also recognized the need to further enhance the relationship between the UN Secretariat and the AU Commission. It noted with appreciation the progress made in this respect, including the launching of annual consultative meetings on conflict prevention, management and resolution, also referred to as the Desk-to-Desk Consultation, between the UN Department of Political Affairs and the AU Peace and Security Department, as part of the "Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme" signed between the UN Secretariat and the AU Commission in November 2006. Council underlined the importance of more sustained efforts towards the full implementation of the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme.

10. Council supported the establishment of a joint AU Commission – UN Secretariat team to look in-depth into the recommendations that have been made, bearing in mind the need to address, in a more comprehensive and effective way, the issue of predictable, sustainable and flexible funding for AU-led peace support operations, including start-up funding, notably through the proposed multi-donor trust fund, which should be endowed with adequate resources and whose scope should be broadened to cover, in addition to capacity building, operational costs; more flexible in-kind support for AU operations; and financial support through assessed contributions. Council also requested that the joint AU Commission - UN Secretariat team examine the proposal made regarding institutional capacity, training and logistics in light of existing efforts and initiatives within the African Union and between it and other partners, with the aim of complementing them and enhancing their effectiveness.

11. Council proposed that the joint annual meetings between the AU PSC and the UN Security Council undertake a regular review of the follow-up on the report of the Panel and the work of the envisaged joint AU Commission - UN Secretariat team.

12. Council mandated its Chairperson to participate in the debate of the Security Council on the report of the Panel, scheduled to take place on 18 March 2009, in collaboration with the African Group in New York and the African members of the UN Security Council. It also requested the Commission to mobilize as much support as possible from AU partners, including the EU, in the context of the Lisbon Joint Strategy and Action Plan, to facilitate an effective follow-up on the report and more adequate response to the need to support, in a sustained, predictable and flexible way, African-led peace support operations.

13. Council requested the Commission to formally forward this communiqué to the United Nations Security Council.

Addis Ababa, 13 March 2009