



PEACE, PROSPERITY AND
REGIONAL INTEGRATION

COMMUNIQUE´ OF THE 48TH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE IGAD COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

The IGAD Council of Ministers held its 48th Ordinary Session on 30th November 2022 in Khartoum, Republic of Sudan, under the chairmanship of **H.E. Ali El-Sadig**, Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Sudan and Chair of the IGAD Council of Ministers. The meeting was attended by **H.E. Mahmoud Ali Youssouf**, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Djibouti; **H.E. Demeke Mekonnen**, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia; **H.E. Dr. Alfred Mutua**, Cabinet Secretary for Foreign and Diaspora Affairs of the Republic of Kenya; **H.E. Abshir Omar Huruse**, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Federal Republic of Somalia; **H.E. Mayiik Ayii Deng**, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Republic of South Sudan; and **H.E. Dr. Rashid Yahaya Ssemddu**, Ambassador of the Republic of Uganda to the Republic of Sudan.

Also in attendance were **H.E. Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu**, Executive Secretary of IGAD; **H.E. Amb. Dr. Ismail Wais**, the IGAD Special Envoy for South Sudan; **H.E. Amb. Mohamed Ali Guyo**, IGAD Special Envoy for the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden and Somalia; **H.E. Amb. Maj. Gen. (rtd.) Charles Tai Gituai**, Interim Chairperson of RJMEC; and **H.E. Gen. Asrat Denero Amad**, Chairperson of CTSAMVM.

Also present were **H.E. Annette Weber**, the European Union Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa; **H.E. Michelle Tomassi**, Ambassador of the Republic of Italy to the Republic of Sudan and co-chair of the IGAD Partners Forum; and **H.E. Ambassador John T. Godfrey**, U.S Ambassador to the Republic of Sudan.

Following extensive deliberations on the reports tabled by **H.E. Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu**, the Executive Secretary of IGAD, on regional peace and security, disaster, displacement and humanitarian situation as well as the work of the IGAD Secretariat and in addition to the Report and Recommendations of the Meeting of IGAD Technical Experts, **the Council:**

Thanked the people and Government of Sudan for convening and hosting the 48th Ordinary Session of the IGAD Council of Ministers and for the legendary Sudanese hospitality extended to delegates from Member States, the IGAD Secretariat, partner organizations and countries;

On Peace and Security;

Congratulated Member States that have successfully conducted peaceful elections in the past two years, positively contributing to the stability of the region;

Welcomed the Permanent Cessation of Hostilities Agreement signed between the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and Tigray People's Liberation Front in Pretoria, South Africa, on 2nd November 2022 and the subsequent Declaration of Senior Commanders on Modalities for the Implementation of the Agreement signed in Nairobi, Kenya, on 12th November 2022;

Appreciated the instrumental role played by IGAD and in particular, the pivotal role played by H.E. Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu, Executive Secretary of IGAD in close collaboration with the African Union, United Nations and the United States of America, and **committed** to continue working together in order to mobilize and avail support for the full implementation of the Agreement.

Further appreciated the Republic of Kenya and H.E. President William Ruto for appointing H.E. former President Uhuru Kenyatta to co-mediate the Ethiopia peace agreement, and for providing venue for the 2nd round of talks in Nairobi, and for the wider role he is playing to improve regional peace and security as the East African Community facilitator at peace talks on the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo;

Commended the outcomes of the bilateral consultations between the President of the transitional sovereignty council of the Republic of Sudan, H.E. General Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan and the Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, H.E. Abiy Ahmed Ali on the sidelines of the 39th Extraordinary Assembly of IGAD Heads of State and Government in July of this year that culminated in the de-escalation of tensions along the shared border;

Welcomed the progress made in the ongoing Sudan talks to reach political consensus leading to the formation of a civilian government in the country and **lauded** the active engagement of IGAD in the Trilateral Mechanism with the African Union and United Nations and in this regard, **urged** all Sudanese stakeholders to positively contribute to fast-tracking the resumption of the transition to civilian-led government;

Called upon Member States to support the work of the Trilateral Mechanism of IGAD, AU and the UN in the Republic of Sudan and ongoing efforts to successfully conclude the transition process;

Advocated for the reinstatement of the membership of the Republic of Sudan to the African Union and **resolved** to engage the African Union to dispatch a fact-finding mission to the Republic of Sudan;

Commended the Government of Somalia for progress registered towards greater national cohesion, stability and unity;

Strongly Condemned the terrorist attacks conducted in the region in particular the attack by the FRUD-Armé in the Republic of Djibouti and continuing attacks by *Al-Shabaab* in Somalia and Ethiopia and further, **called upon** Member States and the international community to step up efforts in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism including support to ATMIS and the Federal Forces of Somalia;

Congratulated the Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity (R-TGoNU) and the Parties to the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) for the graduation of Phase One of the Necessary Unified Forces (NUF) and for the unanimous agreement on a Roadmap, which among others, extends the Transitional Period by twenty-four months to February 2025 to allow time for the completion of outstanding tasks including the conduct of credible elections;

Applauded the role played by the Republic of the Sudan as the Chair of IGAD in the progress made in the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) particularly in relation to Transitional Security Arrangements;

Expressed concern over the ongoing communal conflict in Upper Nile since August 2021 which if not contained, has the potential to re-ignite a wider national conflict and in this regard, **urged** the R-TGoNU to redouble efforts to resolve the conflict through dialogue and implementation of relevant provisions of the Transitional Security Arrangements;

Resolved to undertake a joint Ministerial visit to South Sudan to review the current status of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) and hold bi-annual extra-ordinary Council meetings to review progress of implementation;

Alarmed by the dire financial situation of the two IGAD-supported monitoring mechanisms of the South Sudan peace process, RJMEC and CTSAMVM, occasioned by the abrupt withdrawal of support by the United States of America, **called upon** Member States, regional and international community to mobilize and avail in-kind and financial support by convening the chiefs of defense from Member States to assess the immediate logistical and material needs of CTSAMVM, as well as wider resource mobilization by working with the AU and UN to fast-track the establishment of the Special Reconstruction Fund (SRF) and South Sudan pledging conference;

Embraced the principle of “African Solutions to African Problems” and **decided** to apply this doctrine as the *modus operandi* of IGAD with regard to peace and security as well as humanitarian, development interventions and regional integration;

Called upon the international community to accept that sanctions are not solutions and instead disproportionately affect vulnerable communities and, in this regard, **urged** for the lifting all sanctions hampering humanitarian and development assistance in the region and **further urged** all partners to refrain from conditional provision of humanitarian support.

On the Regional Disaster, Displacement and Humanitarian Situation

Concerned by prolonged drought impacting over 10% of the region’s population that has caused large-scale population displacement with over 2 million people becoming internally displaced, **resolved** to mobilize all the necessary support to timely and adequately respond to the looming humanitarian crisis in the region;

Commended the exemplary work done by IGAD Secretariat in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic that has reached more than 1.9 million people and 8.6 million sets of personal protective equipment, 36 medical support vehicles and 14 PCR mass-testing machines have been delivered to Member States including in high-risk cross border areas, 14 refugee camps and IDP settlements and 11 migrant reception centers;

Lauded the leadership and health officials and workers in Uganda for the sacrifices and effort in trying to contain the Ebola situation, and **committed** to closely liaise and work with Ugandan authorities in arresting the spread of the virus and also provide support when needed;

Mindful of the devastating impact that the confluence of the COVID-19 Pandemic, drought and the conflict in Ukraine is having on the already fragile regional economy and food security situation, Noted the regional Food Security and Nutrition Response Strategy (2020 – 2022) and **tasked** the Secretariat to revitalize this strategy to align with Sudan's proposals for an IGAD Food Security Strategy;

Recognizing that climate change, conflict and disaster-induced displacement continue to exacerbate the scale of disasters that the region experiences, **decided**, as agreed in the recently concluded **COP27** Summit, to establish a regional Climate Security Coordination Mechanism that will build the capacity of IGAD Member States to anticipate, prevent and mitigate the outset of climate-induced conflict and displacement;

Took note of the COP28 Summit in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates United Arab Emirates and called upon the IGAD Member States to adequately prepare to arrive at a common position on the climate change agenda;

Called upon the International Community and stakeholders to continue providing assistance to the IGAD support platform for IDPs, Refugees and host communities in Sudan and South Sudan;

On the Work of the Secretariat;

Welcomed the 2023 Chairmanship Roadmap of the Republic of Sudan, which seeks to strengthen solidarity between Member States and promoting regional economic integration as a strategy to promote security and stability as the necessary conditions for advancing the role of youth and women to contribute to regional prosperity, and **called upon** Member States to provide the required support for its implementation;

Welcomed the Republic of Sudan's initiative to establish a harmonised mobilisation platform for IGAD Member State Ambassadors abroad and **tasked** the Secretariat to provide a roadmap with Terms of Reference to that end;

Thanked the Republic of Sudan for its generosity in supporting the IGAD scholarships programme 200 placements in the International University of Africa for refugees, returnees, IDP's and host communities in the context of the 2017 Djibouti Declaration and **appealed** to IGAD Member States to similarly contribute scholarship awards to this programme;

Welcomed the invitation extended to the IGAD Council of Ministers by the Cabinet Secretary of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs of the Republic of Kenya to a high-level regional strategic consultation in the first quarter of 2023 and **further appreciated** the offer of the Republic of Kenya to host this meeting;

Commended the detailed report of the Executive Secretary on the work of the IGAD Secretariat and lauded the leadership and staff for the satisfactory progress made in the implementation of projects and programs and undertaking the much-needed institutional reforms, and **expressed** its full support to the Secretariat in completing the remaining institutional reforms including implementation of the revised Resource Mobilization Strategy;

Tasked the Secretariat to finalize the draft IGAD Treaty in close consultation with Member States and table it for consideration at the next meeting of the Council for review and subsequent submission to the IGAD Heads of State and Government for adoption;

Emphasized the importance of adhering to the principles of equity and fairness in undertaking the organizational and institutional reforms and **directed** the Secretariat to ensure the equitable distribution of projects and programs among Member States as well as the introduction of a quota system for staffing across the board;

Urged Member States to conclude payment of arrears and consistently honour the statutory remittance of assessed annual contributions as a critical requirement to fully realize and operationalize ongoing organizational and institutional reforms and effective implementation of IGAD projects and programs;

Emphasized the need for IGAD to be formally represented in the Headquarters of major international organizations subject to available financial capacity;

Noted and thanked the Republic of Djibouti for allocating land for the Headquarters of the IGAD Secretariat, and observing the progress made towards the preparation of its construction, **committed** the support of the Member States for the secretariat to mobilize the resources needed to successfully conclude this project from diverse sources including bank loans.

Called upon IGAD Heads of State and Government to adopt Arabic as one of the official languages of IGAD;

Adopted the recommendations from the technical experts meeting preceding the 48th ordinary session of the IGAD Council of Ministers;

Congratulated Member States for signing the IGAD Protocol on Free Movement of Persons and the IGAD Protocol on Transhumance and **tasked** the secretariat to engage the remaining Member States of The Republic of Djibouti, Republic of Kenya, Federal Republic of Somalia and the Republic of Uganda to sign the Protocols;

Endorsed the Policy on Informal Cross-Border Trade and Security Governance, Disaster Risk Management Strategy;

Took Note of the Protocol on Preventive Diplomacy and Mediation and **tasked** the secretariat to table it for signature at the next ordinary session of the Council;

Reiterated the imperative for IGAD to be a rule-based organization and conduct its meetings regularly and in this regard, **decided** to hold the next ordinary session of the Council in early 2023 at the secretariat headquarters in the Republic of Djibouti;

Done on 30th November 2022