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P. O. Box 3243, Addis Ababa, ETHIOPIA Tel.: 513822 Fax: (251-1) 519321
Email: oau-ews@telecom.net.et

**REPORT OF THE THIRD BRAINSTROMING RETREAT OF
AFRICAN AMBASSADORS IN ADDIS ABABA ON THE AFRICAN
UNION PEACE & SECURITY AGENDA**

1 - 4 MAY 2004

CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Third Brainstorming Retreat for the Permanent Representatives of Member States to the African Union was held from 2 - 4 May 2004, at the Western Cape Hotel and Spa, Kleinmond (Cape Town), South Africa. The purpose of the Retreat was to reflect on the challenges to peace and security in Africa and their possible solutions. It also aimed at exploring the practical modalities for strengthening the peace and security architecture of the African Union, particularly the new Peace and Security Council (PSC).

2. The Third Brainstorming Retreat was organized by the Peace and Security Department of the AU Commission in collaboration with the Government of South Africa, UNDP, and SaferAfrica. It was organized around the following themes: 1) Working Methods of the Peace and Security Council; 2) Role of NEPAD in Consolidating Peace and Development in Africa; 3) Resource Mobilization for the AU Peace Fund to Support African Peace and Security Initiatives; 4) Establishment of the African Standby Force; 5) Early Warning and Early Response; and 6) Relations between the AU and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) with Special Focus on Africa's Peace and Security Architecture: Coordination and Harmonization.

3. Thirty-seven (37) Permanent Representatives of AU Member States in Addis Ababa took part in the Brainstorming. Other participants included Hon. Aziz Pahad, Deputy Foreign Minister of the Republic of South Africa, representing Dr. Nkosazana Zuma, the Minister of Foreign Affairs; Mr. Fidele Dionou, UNDP Representative to the African Union; representatives from the AU Commission; Experts from the United Nations as well as representatives from SaferAfrica.

II. OPENING

4. Ambassador Said Djinnit, Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, officially opened the Third African Peace and Security Agenda Brainstorming Retreat, by thanking all the participants for responding positively to the invitation of the Commission.

5. The Commissioner recalled the two previous retreats of African Ambassadors, held in 1998 and 2002, respectively. He noted the progressive thinking that has guided the Commission in conceptualising and organizing the three brainstorming retreats, stressing the fact that the idea had been to make each retreat more inclusive, and to

come up with themes that could stimulate discussion and respond to day-to-day challenges to peace and security in Africa.

6. Amb. Djinnit informed the participants of the purpose of the Third Brainstorming Session, highlighting the importance of examining the challenges to peace and security in Africa and the need to explore the practical modalities for mobilizing resources for enhancing the effectiveness of the Peace and Security Council in the promotion and maintenance of peace and security in Africa. He contended that the Second Brainstorming Retreat, held in George, in 2002, was very successful, and had led to the emergence of a new security architecture for the continent. In this context, he expressed the hope that the Third Brainstorming Retreat would be equally successful and generate recommendations for the way forward in confronting the challenges to peace and security in Africa.

7. The Commissioner concluded his remarks by thanking the UNDP, SaferAfrica and the Government of South Africa for the support they had provided to the Commission in the planning and organization of the Third Brainstorming Session. He extended special thanks to Hon. Aziz Pahad, Deputy Foreign Minister of South Africa, and through him, congratulated the Government of South Africa and the ANC Party for the recent successful Elections.

III. STATEMENT BY HON. AZIZ PAHAD, DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS FOR SOUTH AFRICA

8. The Deputy Minister began his statement by underscoring the timely organization of the Third Brainstorming Retreat, at a time when the world had just commemorated the Tenth Anniversary of the Rwandan genocide, an event that epitomized the failure of the international community and Africa, in particular, to prevent the most horrendous killings and human disaster in recent history. According to the Minister, the memories of the genocide against the backdrop of the prevailing conflicts in Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Darfur, the Sudan, and Somalia should guide the participants in their search for durable solutions. He further underscored the fact that the problems of the continent have been compounded by prevailing poverty and underdevelopment. In this context, he espoused the view that peace on the continent cannot be achieved without development and vice versa, and that NEPAD could play an instrumental role in creating a conducive environment for peace and security, by overcoming the challenges to African development.

9. He welcomed the entry into force of the Peace and Security Council, stressing the fact that the decisions of the Council can make a real impact on the continent. He appealed to fellow members of the PSC to take their responsibility seriously in order to meet the expectations of the African peoples. In view of the importance of the PSC, the Speaker stressed the need for the Organ to meet timeously and in continuous session, if it is to succeed.

10. He underscored the need for the 3rd Brainstorming Retreat to discuss the role of the PSC in post-conflict reconstruction and conflict prevention vis-à-vis the Early Warning System, the Panel of the Wise and the African Standby Force. There is a dire necessity, therefore, to expedite and ensure the operationalisation of the peace and security architecture of the continent, especially the Continental Early Warning System, the Panel of the Wise and the ASF, as well as the Common African Defence and Security Policy, and strengthening of relations between the AU and Regional Economic Communities (RECs), which would contribute to the effective functioning of the PSC.

11. The Deputy Foreign Minister reiterated the importance of the role of the UN as a Partner in the promotion and maintenance of peace and security in Africa. He contended that the meeting on AU-Europe dialogue, held in Dublin, in February 2004, had confirmed the overarching importance of multilateralism and partnership, which should underpin the work of the PSC. In this context, he underlined the need for the PSC to engage with the UN and push for reforms in all the organs of the latter, taking into account the concerns of the continent.

12. Finally, the Speaker underscored the need for the Third Brainstorming Retreat to make recommendations to the African Heads of State and Government on how the African Union and Member States could relate to and bring positive reforms to the Bretton Woods institutions so that they could contribute to African development.

IV. ADOPTION OF PROGRAMME OF WORK

13. The following Programme of Work was adopted by the Third Brainstorming Retreat:

- **Morning Session:** 9:00 AM - 12:00 Noon
- **Lunch:** 12:00 Noon - 1:45 PM
- **Afternoon Session:** 1:45 PM - 6:00 PM

V. ROLE OF NEPAD IN CONSOLIDATING PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

14. The Session was chaired by Amb. Omar A. Touré, Permanent Representative of the Gambia to the African Union. The main presenter was Professor Wiseman Nkuhlu, Chairperson of the NEPAD Steering Committee.

15. In his presentation, Prof. Nkuhlu highlighted the role of NEPAD in promoting the African Union's peace and security agenda, particularly as a mechanism for accelerating socio-economic development on the continent, and for mobilizing much-needed

resources to that effect. He reminded the participants that NEPAD was conceived on the premise that factors such as poor governance have contributed to the lack of socio-economic development in Africa. In order to accelerate the pace of development, NEPAD is driven by a new thinking built on certain fundamental principles and values such as regional integration, partnership, democracy, and good political and corporate governance. In this context, he underscored the importance of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) in monitoring progress made by African countries and ensuring the propitious conditions for sustainable development. He regretted that as of date, only 19 countries had signed on to the APRM.

16. Prof. Nkuhlu argued that, in playing this unique role, NEPAD has helped to identify and bring to the fore, the political, economic and social factors underlying the root causes of underdevelopment in Africa. He added that NEPAD has also facilitated dialogue on development issues between Africa and its development partners, including the G-8, and the European Union. In this connection, he informed the participants about the new African Partnership Forum (APF), established to enhance this dialogue and to promote Africa's peace and security agenda. Thus, NEPAD has helped to create the conducive environment for peace, security and political dialogue. Prof. Nkuhlu reiterated the key role that NEPAD is playing in mobilizing resources for peace and security agenda in Africa and how this role could be strengthened in post-conflict reconstruction and peace-building.

17. In the ensuing discussion, many of the participants who took the floor stressed the importance of NEPAD and, particularly its APRM in generating propitious conditions for development and peace in Africa. The following points and recommendations were emphasized:

- i) NEPAD should continue to create the propitious conditions for peace and security by promoting dialogue among African countries and between Africa and the International Community, as well as to mobilize the necessary resources;
- ii) African countries should be encouraged to take part in the African Peer Review Mechanism;
- iii) more efforts should be aimed at mobilizing more resources from within Africa;
- iv) post-conflict reconstruction should include the notion of nation-building, and should focus on how better to engage the parties or combatants so as to build trust among the parties and create the space for building the necessary institutions and infrastructures for nation-building (it was stressed that the concept of nation-building should be integrated into post-conflict reconstruction);

- v) consideration should be given to the humanitarian aspect of post-conflict reconstruction, particularly the needs of refugees, displaced persons and returnees;
- vi) the role of the African Union in post conflict reconstruction should be clearly defined and enhanced;
- vii) NEPAD should be fully integrated and harmonized with the various AU programmes to avoid duplication;
- viii) the PSC should address the root causes of conflicts and their prevention strategies;
- ix) the need to build partnerships among African countries, and with civil society, the RECs and with the international community and other important players in conflict prevention, management and resolution

VI. WORKING METHODS OF THE PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL

18. This session was chaired by Amb. Ana N. Uaiene, Permanent Representative of Mozambique to the African Union and Chairperson of the PRC. The Speakers were Amb. Baso Sangqu, Permanent Representative of the Republic of South Africa to the African Union; and Amb. Shola Omoregie, United Nations Expert, Security Council Division.

19. In his presentation, Amb. Sangqu underscored the need to take into consideration the principles and purpose underpinning the PSC in developing its working methods, and that the latter should reflect the kind of PSC the continent wants to create. He raised a number of questions that the Third Brainstorming Retreat should address with regard to the working methods of the PSC. These include: how to ensure the principle of inclusiveness in the PSC; how to strengthen the role of PSC members vis-à-vis that of the AU Commission; how the PSC should relate to the UN Security Council; what form should PSC decisions take; how to develop linkages between the PSC and other institutions such as the Continental Early Warning System, the Panel of the Wise, the African Standby Force, Pan-African Parliament; the African Court of Justice, etc.; and the role of the Chairperson of the PSC.

20. On his part, Amb. Omoregie remarked that the methods of work or matters of procedure in general terms are an evolutionary process, which is constantly amended as the need arises and based on the prevailing circumstances. He stressed that the PSC should establish priorities in its work, and presented a set of general recommendations that should guide the PSC in agenda setting, the monthly programme of work, the role

of the Chairperson of the PSC, the Secretariat of the PSC; types of meetings, decisions of the PSC, time management, field missions and working groups of the PSC.

21. During the exchange of views that ensued, the following points and recommendations were emphasized:

- i) The PSC should avoid double standards and remain consistent in dealing with all conflicts on the Continent;
- ii) Members of the PSC should be guided by the overall interest of the Continent rather than national or regional interest;
- iii) Members of the PSC should be encouraged to keep their respective Regions informed of the work of the PSC;
- iv) Members of the PSC should develop the capacity to meet their responsibilities;
- v) Members of the PSC should be encouraged to sponsor draft resolution;
- vi) the Chairperson of the month of the PSC should be present in Addis Ababa at all times during his/her chairpersonship;
- vii) the PSC should adopt decisions in addition to communiqués;
- viii) the PSC should ensure that its procedures for reporting at all levels, are transparent and better coordinated among its members;
- ix) the PSC should establish clear priorities to ensure that it does not lose focus;
- x) the PSC should take stock of and list in sequential order, the items handled by the Central Organ. The PSC should then meet and decide on which on finish business of the Central Organ to inherit;
- xi) the incoming Chairperson of the PSC should draw up a programme for the month, which should be submitted to the Commission and subsequently discussed informally among the PSC members for its adoption;
- xii) the Commission should accelerate the process for the establishment of the Peace and Security Council Secretariat within the PSD, as a matter of priority;
- xiii) the Chairperson of the Commission should assist the incoming Chairperson of the PSC to draw up the programme for the month;

- xiv) the Chairperson of the month and the Chairperson of the Commission should take stock of all the activities undertaken by the PSC during the month and any unfinished business or items the PSC is seized with, for handing over to the incoming chair;
- xv) it should be the responsibility of PSC members to draft and negotiate their resolutions;
- xvi) a support staff should be designated to work with the incoming Chairperson;
- xvii) the decisions of the Council should be issued only on specific issues and should have a code, instead of the current practice of grouping several items together in a Communiqué;
- xviii) the Council may also consider, for its effective functioning, the establishment of ad hoc working groups and subsidiary bodies;
- xix) in planning field missions, attention should be paid to the size, composition and objectives of the mandate;
- xx) the PSC should consider undertaking, from time to time, field missions to conflict zones;
- xxi) the Secretary to the PSC and other support staff should be recruited or designated as soon as possible;
- xxii) the principle of "inclusivity" and transparency should guide the working methods of the PSC;
- xxiii) in order for the PSC to function swiftly and effectively, a unit should be designated within the Conference Services Department of the Commission, dedicated solely to servicing the PSC;
- xxiv) all Member States of the African Union should be encouraged to ratify/accede to the Protocol relating to the establishment of the PSC;
- xxv) it should be emphasized that, within the context of the Constitutive Act, decisions of the PSC are binding on all Member States of the African Union; and
- xxvi) the PSC should continue brainstorming on its methods of work.

VII. RESOURCE MOBILIZATION FOR THE AU PEACE FUND TO SUPPORT AFRICAN PEACE AND SECURITY INITIATIVES

22. This session was chaired by Amb. John Evonlah Aggrey, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Ghana to the African Union. The main Speaker was Mr. Fidele Dionou, UNDP Representative to the African Union and Chief Liaison Officer with the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA).

23. Mr. Dionou began his presentation by situating the need for the AU Commission to build a resource base for the Peace Fund within the context of ongoing efforts to formulate a vision and a four-year strategic implementation plan, particularly in the area of peace and security. He underscored the importance of mobilizing resources from within Africa, especially from AU Member States, and from external partners to be critical for the Commission to achieve its goals. He focused his remarks on the following areas: the concept of resource mobilization, the experience of the UNDP, AU/UNDP Project and a set of recommendations for the AU.

24. During the general exchange of views that ensued, many of the participants who took the floor stressed the need for more resource mobilization from within the continent and particularly from AU Member States to enable the African Union have more control and ownership over the peace and security architecture of the continent. The following points and recommendations were also emphasized:

- i) the responsibility for mobilizing resources for the PSC should be entrusted to a specialized and separate unit for resource mobilization, which should be operationalized as soon as possible;
- ii) the AU should examine the possibilities of raising taxes for those import/export items that are conflict-specific, such as arms, in order to raise funds for the Peace Fund;
- iii) the Peace Fund should be popularized among Member States and the latter should be encouraged to contribute to it;
- iv) there should be transparency and a proper reporting and accountability in the management of the Peace Fund;
- v) the percentage of the budget earmarked for the "Prevention" component of the PSC should be increased to allow for more preventive programmes;
- vi) a "Global Fund" for the collection of all resources meant for the different programmes of the Commission should be established. This "Global Fund" or aspects of it could be code-named after a famous African personality or an African from the diaspora or other captivating names to encourage the private sector and other individuals to contribute to the Fund;

- vii) the resource mobilization programmes of the Commission and its Departments should be coordinated with those of Regional Economic Communities;
- viii) appropriate structures and constituencies such as the Pan-African Parliament, the Diaspora, Women and Youth organizations, Civil Society, etc. should be used to sensitize Africans on the Peace Fund or the "Global Fund;"
- ix) the AU should have full control and ownership over the Peace Fund;
- x) strategies should be devised for the effective management of and rationalization of resources allocated for peace and security, including measures to reduce consumption of resources mobilized by investing more on the less expensive preventive programmes;

25. With regard to the Peace Fund, the following recommendations were made:

- i) a consultative process should be initiated from the initial stage. Partners should be involved in the formulation of the project documents, in their finalization and eventually should be kept updated on the implementation process;
- ii) the project documents should have clearly identified objectives, strategies and activities in line with the set out objectives;
- iii) the AU should build a partnership culture at all levels of the Commission;
- iv) the AU should promote the Peace Fund and related peace initiatives as special products with the clear objectives and strategies to market them to Member States and external Partners;
- v) the Peace and Security Directorate (PSD) could prepare a clearly articulated brochure on the Peace Fund, detailing its objectives, activities anticipated results including financial table on the resource requirements, Information and circulation;
- vi) the PSD could establish a resource mobilization chart, indicating on yearly basis, the amount of resources that need to be mobilized, the present and potential donors and if possible the activities to be undertaken by each unit/person in order to reach the target indicated;
- vii) the AU could consider convening a pledging conference or donors round table to mobilize resources for the Peace Fund;

- viii) the AU could undertake an analysis of the experience gained so far in mobilizing resources for the peace fund;
- ix) the AU could consider, as part of its strategy to mobilize funds for the peace fund, to identify specific projects to be the subject of a specific campaign oriented towards particular Donors;
- x) the PSD should do its utmost to ensure greater visibility for the peace fund by considering for securing the peace fund after past or present prominent Africans in the continent or in the diaspora;
- xi) the AU should consider establishing a resource mobilization Unit.

VIII. AU AND PEACE SUPPORT: ESTABLISHMENT OF THE AFRICAN STANDBY FORCE

26. This session was chaired by Amb. Konjit Sinegiorgis, Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the African Union. The main Speaker was Brig. Gen. Pal Martins of SaferAfrica.

27. Brig. Gen. Martins began with an overview of the efforts undertaken to establish the African Standby Force (ASF) and the Military Staff Committee (MSC), tracing their roots to the proliferation of conflicts on the continent, which provoked African leaders to think of innovative ways to overcome the challenges of conflicts. According to Martins, the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council is an embodiment of these historical concerns and the principles and objectives enunciated in the Constitutive Act of the African Union.

28. He highlighted the Second and Third meetings of the African Chiefs of Defence Staff, held in October 1997 and May 2003, respectively, as having expounded the concept and the operational procedures of the ASF and the MSC, contained in the Policy Framework for the Establishment of the African Standby Force and the Military Staff Committee, that was adopted by the First Meeting of the African Ministers of Defence and Security, held in January 2004.

29. Brig. Gen. Martins noted that only one of the five regions has convened a meeting of ACDS aimed at establishing a brigade at the regional level in conformity with the decision of the First Meeting of African Ministers of Defence and Security. In this context, he highlighted the following areas for discussion: multidimensional strategic level and mission management capacities at the regional level, the establishment of multinational and multidisciplinary regional work groups, external initiatives, human resources, and funding.

30. Amb. Ibok complemented the remarks of Brig. Gen. Martins by informing the participants about the ongoing process to formulate a Memorandum of Understanding between the AU Commission and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), stressing that the MoU aims at harmonizing the initiatives of the RECs with that of the AU, as well as strengthening their roles in the promotion and maintenance of peace and security in Africa.

31. During the discussion that ensued, the following points and recommendations were emphasized:

- i) requests to the United Nations and other partners by the RECs should be made in concert with the AU Commission. In this context, the Commission should play an interface role between the RECs and the UN as well as with other partners;
- ii) the mandate for regional brigades should be given by the PSC, to ensure coherence and unity of action;
- iii) the African Union should continue to seek the support and cooperation of the United Nations in its efforts to establish and operationalize the African Standby Force;
- iv) cooperation and the coordination of initiatives among the RECs should be reinforced and duplication of efforts avoided;
- v) the Regional Brigades should be established gradually, commensurate to the capacity of and resources at the disposal of the Regions. Regions should also be encouraged to share experiences and best practices;
- vi) the Commission of the African Union should pursue negotiations with the European Union to ensure support for the Peace Facility;
- vii) activities and initiatives of the RECs should be harmonized with those of the African Union;
- viii) Member states should be encouraged to fund or raise funds for the establishment of regional brigades;
- ix) the UN and other external partners including the EU should be engaged to assist in mobilizing the necessary resources and logistics for operationalization of the ASF and MSC;
- x) a role should be envisaged for NEPAD to assist facilitating dialogue with the G8, in terms indicating the priority areas for assistance. However, the

- Regional Chiefs of Defence Staff must meet and draw up their implementation plans;
- xi) the matter of harmonisation, rationalisation, and compatibility of AU regions and their respective RECs should be referred to the Heads of State and Government during the launching of the PSC on the 25th of May 2004, for them to take a decision in order to avoid the problem of cross-cutting membership;
 - xii) the AU should provide assistance and support to the RECs;
 - xiii) interoperability of equipment, SOPs, Chain of Command, etc. developed at continental level should be cascaded down to the regions;
 - xiv) decisions taken by organs of the Union should be officially forwarded to the RECs to seek their support and cooperation in the implementation of the said decisions.

IX. EARLY WARNING AND EARLY RESPONSE

32. This session was chaired by Ambassador Emmanuel Mendoume Nze, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Gabon to the African Union. The main Speaker was Ms Adwoa Coleman, Head of the Early Warning Unit, Commission of the African Union.

33. Ms. Coleman gave a brief overview of the international debate on early warning as it developed in the UN from the 1980s, culminating in the establishment of a UN early warning capacity in 1998, and how that event generated a new momentum for the establishment of a continental early warning system in Africa, which led to the adoption of the Cairo Declaration on the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution in 1993.

34. She defined early warning as basically consisting of information gathering, analysis of data, and preparation of reports, which are submitted to decision-makers with clear recommendations for policy actions. While stressing the importance of early action as a key component of an early warning system, she conceded the fact that the main problem with the AU CEWS, is the absence of a culture of and mechanism for rapid response to early warning signals.

35. She elaborated on the difficulties encountered at the continental level to establish an early warning system, emphasizing the lack of resources and the issue of national sovereignty as often being the major hurdles. According to Coleman, early warning and early response is a joint responsibility of Member States and the Commission, and that it is important for the two to cooperate in all aspects of the establishment of the AU Continental Early Warning System (CEWS).

36. Amb Sam Ibok, complemented the remarks made by Ms Coleman, adding that efforts deployed at the continental level culminated in the establishment, within the Conflict Management Centre, a Situation Room, which functions 24 hours/day on week days and 13 hours/day on weekends. He noted that though the Situation Room collects and disseminates information on conflict situations in Africa, it does not still constitute an early warning system (EWS).

37. He raised a number of unresolved questions with regard to efforts to establish a CEWS, for participants to reflect on during discussion. These included the need for clarity in the concept and definition of early warning: is EWS defined by a module or model? Is it defined by the types of practical actions taken by decision makers? What modules or model should guide the AU in establishing a CEWS? What should be the entry point into a conflict and which institution should take the first step: the RECs or the AU? What are the obligations of Member States in the event of early warning/early action? Can the AU unilaterally intervene in Member States without permission, if it determines that there is a serious crisis?

38. In the ensuing discussion, all the participants who took the floor acknowledged that an early warning system was central to effective conflict prevention. It was emphasized that, in signing the AU Constitutive Act and the Protocol on Peace and Security Council, Member States agreed to cede some of their sovereignty to the continental Organization and that sovereignty should not longer be used as a means to deter the creation of a vibrant continental early warning system. Many of the participants were of the view that there was no need for sophisticated and expensive computer-based early warning system. According to them, what is needed is a proper analytic capacity within the Commission and imaginative early action. The following recommendations emerged from the discussion:

- i) Regional Situation Rooms should be linked directly to the AU Situation Room. Efforts should be deployed to encourage and assist those regions which are yet to establish Situation Rooms;
- ii) the problem of sensitivity of information should be addressed by ensuring that those who work in the EWS are discreet and of high calibre;
- iii) the Commission should strike a balance between the competing needs of confidentiality of information and sharing of information;
- iv) the Early Warning Unit within the Commission should be simple and should not rely heavily on open source information from the western media organizations such as CNN and BBC. The EWS needs to find alternative sources of information from African sources;
- v) in the event of receiving early warning information, the Chairperson of the Commission should dispatch emissaries to the concerned countries alerting

- them of the impending crisis, requesting the countries to verify the information and to assist to early action to prevent the crisis;
- vi) the AU, especially the Commission, should assist in strengthening the early warning capacity of the RECs, as the building blocks of the continental EWS;
 - vii) the 3-year members of the PSC should be given the responsibility of strengthening the Commission's early warning capacity. They should cooperate fully with the Commission and help to convince other countries to cooperate with the Commission in the operationalization of the CEWS;
 - viii) the AU should take a gradual or incremental approach to by establish the CEWS, starting with the establishment of regional focal points and by entering into partnerships with the UN, other relevant international organizations and agencies, as well as with the African civil society organizations;
 - ix) the existing Situation Room within the CMC should serve as the basis for the eventual establishment of a full-fledged EWS;
 - x) the national level should serve as the primary source of information and focal points for collection of information and data should be established at the national level;
 - xi) the Continental Early Warning System should make use of regional AU offices, Scientific Offices, and field missions as sources of early warning information;
 - xii) the AU Commission and its Early Warning Mechanism should take all necessary steps to assuage Member States' fear of losing their sovereignty or that the AU would be involved in collecting intelligence on internal political developments, and one way of doing this would be to establish credible analytical capacity within the EWS;
 - xiii) the Chairperson of the Commission should make use of his good offices, by sending special envoys and other eminent persons to verify claims of imminent crisis, and one way of doing this would be to operationalize the Panel of the Wise as soon as possible;
 - xiv) the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), which shall prepare studies of the status of governance in acceding states, should be used as another source of information;
 - xv) the EWS should also attempt to establish information sharing agreements with the UN System, and with Civil Society Organizations, even if it means

providing support to such Civil Society Organizations such as internet connectivity to the Situation Room;

- xvi) AU Member States should be encouraged to provide the EWS with information, to facilitate early action.

X. RELATIONS BETWEEN THE AU AND THE RECS

39. This session was chaired by Amb. Ali Awidan, Secretary of the People's Bureau of the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to the African Union. The main Speaker was Amb. Sam Ibok, Director for Peace and Security Directorate of the AU commission.

40. Amb. Ibok began by emphasizing the important role of the RECs in the new dispensation of the African Union, and particularly in the implementation of the new security architecture of the continent. He highlighted some of the initiatives taken to strengthen relations between the AU Commission and the RECs in accordance with the provisions of the Constitutive Act and the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council, stressing on the ongoing consultations to finalize a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the RECs in the area of peace and security.

41. He indicated that many of the issues dealing with the relations between the RECs and the AU have been covered in the previous discussions and that it was however, important to highlight at this juncture, some of the critical challenges to the efforts in strengthening interaction and joint actions between the two. In this regard, he raised a number of questions, as to how to enhance harmonization and coordination of activities among the RECs and between the RECs and the AU Commission; how to strengthen the role of the RECs in the implementation of the AU peace and security agenda; how to address the issue of competition between the RECs and the AU over the same sources of funding; how to ensure unity and complementarity of action between the RECs and the AU; how the AU could assert its authority and the kind of leadership that the AU should assume over the RECs; the issue of proximity and comparative advantage with regard to early intervention; and the modalities that should govern the establishment and mandates of brigades at the regional level.

42. In the ensuing discussion, all the participants who took the floor reiterated the importance of the RECs as the building blocks of the AU and the significant role they should play in the implementation of the peace and security agenda of the African Union. There was a unanimous feeling among the participants of the need to rationalize the RECs and to harmonize and coordinate their activities with the AU Commission. With regard to rationalization, it was felt that the issue is political rather than a technical one, and that efforts aimed at rationalization should not lose sight of the

financial benefits or implications involved. The following points and recommendations were also emphasized:

- i) the issue of rationalization should be referred to the Heads of State and Government to take a political decision on the matter;
- ii) the MoU should emphasize the need for unity and complementarity of action between the RECs and the AU Commission, to ensure that when a REC acts it should be regarded as Africa acting, and when the AU acts the REC should also be credited. As such, When either the AU or a REC is engaged in a project, they should be supported by each other;
- iii) the process for finalizing the MoU between the RECs and the AU Commission in the area of peace and security should be expedited;
- iv) proximity should determine comparative advantage but should not be the only factor. As such, the principle of comparative advantage should also take into account the nature of the crisis, risk or vested interest, available resources and efficacy of the REC concerned or the AU;
- v) the MoU should put in place a reciprocal system of participation in meetings, seminars, and symposia organized by the RECs and the AU. In this regard, the AU should be invited to and allowed to participate actively in meetings of the RECs at the highest level, and the AU should do the same for the RECs;
- vi) there should be a permanent mechanism for exchange of information;
- vii) the AU should go through the RECs to get to Member States, whilst the RECs should go thorough the AU to get to international bodies like the UN, EU, etc;
- viii) a mechanism for collaboration should be established between the AU and the RECs to enable them speak in one voice on peace and security issues;
- ix) Focal Points should be established within the RECs and the AU to facilitate coordination and exchange of information;
- x) the AU and the RECs should work in a concerted manner to mobilize the necessary resources for the implementation of joint programmes;
- xi) it should be emphasized that Regional Brigades are an integral part of the African Standby Force;
- xii) the Chairperson of the Commission should liaise with the Chairpersons of the RECs to reinforce coordination and harmonization;

- xiii) it should be emphasized that the RECs are the pillars of the African Economic Community and not structures, but rather stages of a process.

XI. CONCLUSION/CLOSING

43. The Closing Ceremony was presided over by Amb. M. Humphrey Leteka, Permanent Representative of Lesotho to the African Union. In his remarks, Amb. Leteka noted that the Third Brainstorming Retreat had provided an excellent opportunity for all the participants to exchange views and deep reflections on a number of key issues relating to peace and security in Africa. He added that the exchange of views took place in a magnificent atmosphere of frank and open expression, which produced excellent ideas and recommendations for responding to the challenges to peace and security in Africa and for building a stronger peace and security architecture for the continent.

44. Finally, he thanked the participants for their individual and collective contributions to the success of the Third Brainstorming Retreat. He also extended special thanks to the Government of the Republic of South Africa, UNDP, SaferAfrica, the AU Commission, and all those who facilitated or contributed in one way or the other to the organization, planning and success of the Retreat, including the translators, interpreters, technicians and the Hotel Staff. On this note, he wished all participants a safe trip back home and closed the curtains of the Third Brainstorming Retreat.

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