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Opening Remarks by Ambassador Smail Chergui, AU Commissioner for Peace and Security on the Occasion of the Open Session of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) on Enhancing African Union(AU) Efforts in Post-Conflict Reconstruction & Development (PCRD) in Africa, 13 June 2014

- Excellency Chairperson of the PSC for June 2014
- Excellencies Members of the Peace and Security;
- Excellences Representatives of partners, international and regional organizations,
- Distinguished representatives of NGOs and CSOs
- Ladies and Gentlemen;

It is my great pleasure to welcome you all to this open session of the Peace and Security Council devoted to post-conflict reconstruction and development in Africa. The daunting challenge of post-conflict reconstruction and development cannot be over-emphasized. Recent relapses into violent conflicts in South Sudan and the Central African Republic, countries hitherto considered as having emerged from conflict, amply highlights the need to step up efforts to consolidate peace where it has been achieved and to prevent further relapse into violence.

Indeed, it is a fact that, in the early phases of the transition from conflict to peace, processes in favor of peace remain fragile and the risk of resumption of violence also remains high. This is due to the fact that countries emerging from conflicts are characterized by weakened or non-existent capacity at all levels, non-functioning institutions and the absence of a democratic culture, good governance, rule of law and respect for human rights.

Since the adoption of the AU policy on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) in 2006, the Commission has taken a number of steps towards its implementation. These include the identification and mobilization of

African expertise for peacebuilding and related post-conflict reconstruction endeavours; developing the guidelines for the implementation of PCRDR, especially in conducting assessment missions; organization of assessment missions to countries emerging from conflict; implementation of quick impact support projects (QUIPs), now referred to as Peace Strengthening Projects (PSPs); provision of technical assistance to needy countries; and the mobilization of support from within the continent for post-conflict reconstruction and development efforts in the concerned countries, in the framework of the African Solidarity Initiative (ASI).

I wish to seize this opportunity to thank Member States that made solidarity pledges, both in cash and kind, in support to the countries emerging from conflict during the maiden AU Solidarity Conference that took place on 1st February 2014 here in Addis Ababa. The Commission looks forward to the redemption of the pledges to enable concrete activities and programmes to be implemented in the needy countries. I wish to encourage Member States to continue contributing in the spirit of African solidarity

Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen;

The African Union (AU) and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) have put enormous efforts in the facilitation and negotiations of peace agreements. However, the challenge is how to sustain and consolidate such peace processes through rebuilding of prerequisite institutional and governance structures, as well as the infrastructural facilities as enablers for national reconciliation, socio-economic recovery and growth.

Post-conflict recovery and development is a cross cutting issue that links together many actors and stakeholders both at local, national, regional, continental and international levels. The challenge of effective coordination between the AU and other stakeholders is yet to be fully addressed. Building effective partnerships, especially with the African Development Bank (AfDB), the World Bank, UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in post-conflict reconstruction efforts will generate effective impact. The people in the countries emerging from conflict are yearning for the dividends of peace. It is our collective responsibility not to allow these hopes to fade.

It should be stressed that there is still inadequate capacity at all levels to tackle the post-conflict reconstruction and development plight. This capacity deficit ranges from planning and conceptualization of projects and programmes, to the execution, monitoring and evaluation at national and regional levels. The idea of creating an

AU Centre for Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development is meant to address this capacity gap. Moreover, PCRDR is resource intensive: human, technical and financial, and this can partly be addressed in the context of an enhanced and coordinated partnership amongst all stakeholders. In the search for resources and means to execute this noble agenda, the AU and the RECs, as well as the UN, should not be competing or replacing one another. Rather, the principle of complementarities, comparative advantage and collaboration should vividly guide our endeavours and actions.

I wish to recall that at its 230th meeting held on 27 and 31 May 2010, the PSC considered the Report of the Multidisciplinary Mission for the Evaluation of Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development needs, which visited the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) from 21 January to 13 February 2010, and Burundi from 13 to 22 February 2010 [PSC/PR/2 (CCXXX)].

Council amongst others, decided “to establish a Sub-Committee of Council to elaborate and put in place, in collaboration with the relevant regional economic communities and in consultation with ECA, AfDB and other multilateral/bilateral partners, a support program for governance, reconstruction and consolidation of peace, based on mobilizing African expertise and focusing on the long term.” We need to expedite action in this regard, as well as revamp the AU Ministerial Committee on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development on Sudan that was created in 2003.

I am convinced that the discussions today will open the way for concrete proposals to enhance our collective efforts in addressing the post-conflict reconstruction and development gaps at all levels.

I wish you all fruitful deliberations.

I thank you.

2014-06-13

441st Meeting of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, 13 June 2014: Opening remarks, by the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, Ambassador Smail Chergui, During the PSC Open Session on 'Enhancing AU's Efforts on Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD)'.

Peace and Security Department

African Union Commission

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