

ORGANISATION OF AFRICAN UNITY



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Central Organ/MEC/AMB/Comm. (LXXXI)

**COMMUNIQUE OF THE 81ST ORDINARY SESSION OF THE CENTRAL
ORGAN OF THE OAU MECHANISM FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION,
MANAGEMENT AND RESOLUTION AT AMBASSADORIAL LEVEL**

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA, 28 FEBRUARY 2002

Central Organ/MEC/AMB/Comm. (LXXXI)**COMMUNIQUE OF THE 81ST ORDINARY SESSION OF THE CENTRAL ORGAN OF THE OAU MECHANISM FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION, MANAGEMENT AND RESOLUTION AT AMBASSADORIAL LEVEL****ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA, 28 FEBRUARY 2002**

The Central Organ of the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution held its 81st ordinary session at Ambassadorial level in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on Thursday 28 February 2002, to review the situation in the Comoros. The session was chaired by Ambassador S. Akapelwa, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Zambia to the OAU.

The Central Organ considered the Report of the Secretary General on the Deployment of an OAU Military Observer Mission to the Comoros within the Framework of the Strengthening of Security during the Period of Elections [**Central Organ/MEC/AMB/(LXXXI)**].

The Central Organ was briefed by the General Secretariat on the outcome of the mission to the Comoros of the delegation of Military and Security Experts from the countries of the Region and the OAU Troika, which took place from 29 January 2002 to 5 February 2002, as well as on the overall situation in the country.

At the end of its deliberations, the Central Organ:

1. **EXPRESSES ITS APPRECIATION** for the work done by the Team of Military and Security Experts which was mandated by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs/External Relations of the countries of the Region and the OAU Troika, during their meeting held in Pretoria, South Africa, on 18 January 2002, to assess the security situation in the Comoros and make recommendations on the best way to help the country meet its security needs and build its capacity with a view to establishing the conditions conducive to the smooth electoral process and promoting security and trust among the Parties during the transitional period and beyond;
2. **APPROVES** the concept of the operation proposed by the Experts consisting of the deployment of an OAU Military Observer Mission composed of 60 members and 20 technical staff, to monitor the situation in each island and serve as an observation post for all threats against the country, including the establishment of a Standby Regional Force;

3. **AUTHORIZES** the Secretary General to deploy, as a matter of urgency and as an initial step, an OAU Military Observer Mission to the Comoros, for a minimum period of sixty (60) days, starting from 7 March 2002, composed of 30 members and 9 technicians, to assist the Comorian authorities in strengthening security during and after the electoral period, in accordance with the concept of operation presented as Option III in his Report. **Central Organ/MEC/AMB/(LXXXI)**, it being understood that the strength of the Mission could be increased to 60 members and 20 technical staff, depending on the availability of funds;
4. **URGES** Member States to provide Military Observers for the OAU Mission as soon as possible;
5. **ENCOURAGES** the Comorian Parties to continue to implement the Framework Agreement for Reconciliation in the Comoros. In particular, the Central Organ **APPEALS** to all the candidates for the Presidential primaries in Grande Comore and all the Parties involved in the Constitutional Referendum in the islands to remain calm and show restraint during the voting process and beyond, and to do their utmost in order to enhance the climate of confidence and reconciliation, as well as to safeguard peace and security in the country;
6. **APPEALS** to the international community, in particular the OAU Partners in the Comoros, to provide the Transitional Government of National Unity with the necessary support to enable a smooth transition in a climate of peace, security and serenity;
7. **WELCOMES** the successful conclusion of the OAU Military Observer Mission to the Comoros to supervise the arms collection operation in Anjouan, and **PAYS TRIBUTE** to all the Officers who took part in the operation for their work and their contribution to the restoration of a climate of confidence in Anjouan;
8. **COMMENDS** the countries of the Region and the OAU Troika, namely South Africa, Mauritius, Mozambique and Togo, under the leadership of South Africa, for their contribution to this operation by placing their Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers at the disposal of the OAU Mission in the Comoros.