



PRESS RELEASE:

AMANI AFRICA II Final Planning Conference Concludes in South Africa

Lohatla, South Africa, 18 September 2015: The Final Planning Conference of the AMANI AFRICA II Field Training Exercise (AII FTX) was conducted from 14-18 September 2015, at the SA Army Combat Training Center in Lohatla, South Africa. It was chaired by the representative of the African Union Commission (AUC), Mr. Sivuyile Bam, Head of the Peace Support Operations Division.

The aim of the Final Planning Conference was to formulate detailed plans that will guide the operations at the climax of the AMANI AFRICA Exercise cycle. In his opening Statement, Mr Bam, emphasized that the Final Planning Conference is the last decision-making meeting whose outcomes will lay the ground for the successful execution of the exercise. He also thanked all representatives of the AU, Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms (RECS/RMs), Host Nation and Partners for their plans and contributions. He stated that the AII FTX is the first ever field exercise undertaken by the AUC at continental level.

The Exercise Director, General Samaila Ilya, in his opening remarks emphasized that the operationalisation of the ASF fully depended on the quality outcomes of the Final Planning Conference. He stated that the objective of Final Planning Conference was to confirm the exercise specification conduct and the guidelines for analysis and the final report in respect of the exercise. The Force Commander, representing the Host Region, General Sazu, welcomed participants and assured them of hospitality to and warmth during the planning conference as well as the AII FTX.

The Final Planning Conference brought together planners from AU, SADC, RECs/RMs, the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crisis (ACIRC), mentors, experts, evaluators and partners from the EU Delegation, UNOAU, NATO and ICRC. The meeting focused on various aspects including the Exercise structure and control plan update, training audience and Exercise Control (EXCON) induction, the exercise timelines and battle rhythm confirmation, the review of real life mission documents for the Exercise, the Exercise documents, real life support, the exercise manning communication and information systems, advocacy of the AII FTX, opening and closing ceremonies and special requirements.

Participants from the various working groups, finalized their respective plans and set the scene for the AII FTX, which begins next month from 19 October to 7 November 2015, in Lohatla, South Africa.

The AMANI AFRICA II Command Post Exercise (CPX) was conducted in October 2010 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to validate the operational readiness of the ASF. The CPX provided the climax to a two years training and capacity building cycle designed to evaluate the effectiveness of the AUC, through the Peace Support Operations Divisions in order to employ the African Standby Force for an AU Mandated Peace Support Operation.

The AMANI AFRICA II CPX focused mostly on validating policies and processes at the continental strategic level, in employing the ASF within the broader African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). The Exercise provided the platform to support proposals for further organizational and operational developments training, procedures and multidimensional capacities of the ASF. The evaluation report identified some gaps to be corrected before the conduct of the next integrated continental exercise.

It is in line of that that the AU initiated in a follow-up training exercise which provided the opportunity to ensure greater multidimensionality at all levels, as well as better interoperability between capacities available in various regional components of the ASF. It is against this background that the AUC is conducting the AAI FTX to further builds capabilities for the ASF in planning and execution of AU Peace support operations aimed at attaining full operational capability.

- ENDS -