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CONCEPT NOTE

**AFRICAN SOLIDARITY INITIATIVE IN
SUPPORT FOR POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA**

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The African Union (AU)'s commitment to support peace-building, recovery and development has seen the continental organization expand its engagement on this critical issue in a number of post-conflict countries on the continent. This work is anchored in the AU Policy on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD), adopted during the 2006 AU Summit in Banjul, in The Gambia, and relevant provisions of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC), as well as in experience gained from countries and regions emerging from conflict. In the early phases of transition from conflict to peace, experience has shown that gains on peace-building, reconstruction and development often face the risk of collapse if sustained efforts are not made to bolster recovery and growth.
2. The PCRD Policy thus serves as a guide for the development of country-specific policies and strategies that address the peculiar characteristics of each conflict situation. The objective of the Policy is to improve timeliness, effectiveness and coordination of activities in post-conflict countries and to lay the foundation for social justice and sustainable peace. The Policy is conceived as a tool to achieve the following: consolidate peace and prevent relapse of violence; help address the root causes of conflict; encourage fast-track planning and implementation of reconstruction activities; and enhance complementarities and coordination between and among diverse actors engaged in PCRD processes.
3. The PCRD Policy encompasses six priority areas, which are both stand-alone and cross-cutting and represent the pillars upon which all PCRD efforts should be developed and sustained. These are: security, humanitarian emergency assistance, political governance and transition, socio-economic reconstruction and development, human rights, justice and reconciliation, and women and gender. The PCRD Policy is underpinned by following five core principles: African leadership, national and local ownership, inclusiveness, equity and non-discrimination.
4. As part of various follow-up activities for implementation of the PCRD Policy, the AU Commission, through the Peace and Security Department, organized multidisciplinary assessment missions to the following countries (Burundi, Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Sudan, and South Sudan). From these missions, priority areas have emerged for consideration of possible support from other AU member states, in addition to the support from other bilateral and multilateral partners.
5. Based on the work that has been undertaken so far and in view of the challenges at hand, the AU is launching and coordinating the implementation of the ASI, in order to mobilize, from within the continent, increased support, for post-conflict reconstruction and development efforts.

6. The overall response from Government officials and partners consulted in the post-conflict countries concerned has been very positive. The ASI is seen as an initiative whose time has come and one that could further unlock African potential and complement efforts by development partners.

7. This concept note captures the overall approach, key purposes, objectives and outcomes to be pursued under the African Solidarity Initiative.

II. PURPOSE AND OVERALL APPROACH

8. The ASI is intended to provide an opportunity for mobilizing additional commitments and contributions to support on-going efforts on post-conflict reconstruction and development in a number of African countries. The initiative is designed to encourage, motivate, and empower African countries to begin systematically to offer assistance to post-conflict countries.

9. The overall intention is to promote African solidarity and support, as part of an agenda to address the magnitude of challenges being faced by concerned African countries in their post-conflict reconstruction and development efforts.

10. The ASI would enable Africa to identify, pilot or expand technical cooperation activities, some of which are already functioning on a smaller scale, as promising practices. Ensuring that this Initiative succeeds in the long-term is important, as it will help to further expand African solidarity and promote the spirit of the Inter-African Convention on Technical Cooperation signed in 1975.

11. The ASI, as a continental and flagship Initiative to be coordinated by the AU in close collaboration with other stakeholders, represents an additional paradigm for mobilizing support for countries engaged in post-conflict reconstruction and development. The conceptual and planning approach of ASI reflects four important dimensions.

- a) The first is to formally launch the ASI as a process, to be followed by a series of operational activities, including an African Solidarity Conference (ASC), to mobilize both in-kind and funding support for post-conflict reconstruction and development efforts in the countries concerned. Whereas most donor processes and conferences concentrate primarily on financial pledges, the ASI will, in addition, prioritize various in-kind contributions/engagements by African countries. These include sharing of expertise, approaches, best practices, offering training facilities, exchange familiarization schemes, and capacity building.
- b) The second is that the ASI is designed to encourage, motivate, and empower African countries to begin systematically to demonstrate greater solidarity and support towards countries emerged from conflicts.
- c) Thirdly, one overall intention is to promote a paradigm shift which center-stages African self-reliance driven by the motto "Africa helping Africa".

- d) The fourth is that the ASI would provide an opportunity for Africans to generate additional 'out-of-the-box' ideas for addressing PCRD challenges, as well as promoting intra-African solutions in this area.

12. Overall, the Initiative seeks to expand the spirit of African solidarity and mutual support/reliance between and among Member States, as well as to strengthen engagement with other stakeholders, including private sector, civil society, academia, the Diaspora and the media. Hence, multiple processes of broad sensitization, awareness creation and commitment-building for the ASI will constitute an important part of the implementation process.

III. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED RESULTS OF THE ASI

13. The ASI is intended to serve the following specific objectives:

- Instituting a platform aimed at increasing contributions for PCRD activities in Africa;
- Mobilizing both financial and, most importantly, in-kind contributions from African countries, parastatals, private sector and other potential contributors;
- Instituting and expanding processes for intra-African sharing of technical expertise and capacity training;
- Increasing the level of intra-African mutual assistance and self-reliance; and
- Creating conditions for further support from international partners.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION AND COORDINATION ARRANGEMENTS

14. The ASI is scheduled to be launched during the July 2012 AU Summit. The launching event will affirm political will and commitment of African leaders in buttressing the notion of African solutions to African problems and pave the way for enhanced spirit of mutual cooperation among Member States. Subsequently, a full-fledged ASI programme will be rolled out. Coordination and monitoring mechanisms will be put in place. The relevant AU Organs will be regularly informed of the progress made.

15. The follow up of ASI will be ensured by the AU Commission, through the Peace and Security Department, which will work in synergy with other relevant Departments, the Liaison Offices AU, other relevant AU structures, including the Regional Offices, NEPAD and the Specialized Institutions of the AU. The Commission will also work with the beneficiary countries, as well as with relevant UN agencies, the AfDB, ECA and other stakeholders.

V. MONITORING, REVIEW AND EVALUATION

16. The Initiative will be implemented for an initial duration of three years. Whereas regular progress reports on the implementation of activities will take place twice per year, a mid-term evaluation would be conducted, with a final evaluation taking place at the end of the three years period, thus providing recommendations for the way forward.

17. A mechanism will also be developed to monitor pledges, both financial and in-kind. Furthermore, efforts will be made to continuously monitor and review progress of various activities within the countries concerned.