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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, P.O. Box: 3243 Tel.: (251-11) 5513 822 Fax: (251-11) 5519 321

Email: [situationroom@africa-union.org](mailto:situationroom@africa-union.org)

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **AUC hosts the 2<sup>nd</sup> Steering Committee Meeting to strengthen the AU Capacity for Security Sector Reform (SSR)**

**Addis Ababa, 17 December 2013:** The Commission of the African Union (AU), today, hosted the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Steering Committee for the AU Project, *“Building African Union Capacities for Security Sector Reform (SSR): A Joint United Nations/ European Union Support Action”*, at the AU Headquarters.

The Steering Committee is the oversight body for the project, and comprises the AU as the Chair, the United Nations (the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and the European Union (EU), the funding partners and the African Security Sector Network (ASSN). The objective of the meeting was to provide strategic direction, guidance and support to the Project in all stages of its activities.

In his welcoming remarks, Dr. Tarek A. Sharif, Head of Defence and Security Division (DSD) of the AU Peace and Security Department (DSD) stated that the AU SSR Project is a good example of the international partnership for the promotion of SSR in Africa and indeed, will improve AU's capacity to engage in SSR activities in support of its Member States.

On his part, the Head of the SSR Unit (DPKO), Dr. Adedeji Ebo, highlighted the need to link the AU SSR agenda to the broader African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and generate political support and consensus among AU Member States.

Also speaking during the meeting, Mr. Jean-Francois Hasperue, Head of the Peace and Security Section of the European Union Delegation to the African Union, highlighted the fact that policy documents and modalities established through this Project are only effective if they are translated into a long term capacity development, which requires a strong political will and endorsement from all involved stakeholders, namely the AU Member States and the AUC, as well as the EU and the UN. Furthermore, the Chair of ASSN, Prof. Boubacar N'Diaye also expressed the ASSN's continued commitment in the provision of expertise and future collaboration.

The meeting reviewed the Project activities and the financial statements for 2013 with an emphasis on the efficient utilization of Project funds. The meeting also discussed and adopted the Work Plan for 2014 and resource mobilization strategies for the Project. Meanwhile, two new partners (Netherlands and Norway) officially announced their intentions to join the Project.

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