



PRESS RELEASE

AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION CONCLUDES WORKSHOP ON ENHANCING POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT THROUGH PARTNERSHIP WITH REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITIES AND REGIONAL MECHANISMS

Addis Ababa, 31 October 2017: The Peace and Security Department of the African Union (AU) Commission, with the support of the Training for Peace (TfP) program, just concluded a three-day Workshop on “*Enhancing Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) through Partnerships with Regional Economic Communities and Mechanisms (RECs/RMs)*”, in Harare, Zimbabwe. The workshop, held from 25- 27 October 2017, was also in line with the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) Roadmap 2016 -2020, which prioritizes the AU’S relationship with the RECs/RMs; and the Lusaka Master Road Map on Silencing the Guns in Africa by 2020 through the strengthening of institutional capacities at the AU, RECs/RMs in order to undertake effective post-conflict stabilization, peacebuilding and reconstruction.

The key objectives of the workshop were to review the nature of sub-regional PCRD policies with a view to aligning their implementation with the AU’s PCRD policy; enhance clarity on the shared strategic vision and goals of the AUC, RECs/RMs and relevant stakeholders to facilitate timely and effective support to the member states emerging from conflict; and to define a way forward for enhancing collaboration between the AU and RECs/RMs on PCRD and for increasing coordination as well as harmonization of PCRD approaches.

Opening the Workshop, Mr. Gideon Gumisai Gapare, Director of Policy Research and Training in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic Zimbabwe, stated that, given the importance of PCRD to consolidating peace in post-conflict countries in Africa, the AU should mobilize the requisite resources, including exploring prospects for recourse to the AU Peace Fund. On her part, the Advisor of the AUC Chairperson on Regional Integration, Ambassador Rosette Katungye, emphasized that RECs/RMs are pivotal anchors of the AU PCRD Policy, and commended the progress made by them and the AUC in enhancing PCRD implementation in their respective sub-regions.

Dr. Alhaji Sarjoh Bah, Head of the AU Crisis Management and Post-Conflict Reconstruction Division informed the meeting that the workshop was part of the execution of the recommendations of the 10th Anniversary Workshop on the implementation of the AU PCRD Policy which was held in October 2016. He drew attention to the fact that, the modest successes attained in the AU’s PCRD efforts have been possible because of the existence of some of the key mechanisms of the PCRD architecture most notably, the Inter-Departmental Task Force on PCRD, and noted that, the AU’s PCRD efforts would be enhanced if the full complement of PCRD mechanisms were established.

The Workshop provided a valuable platform for participants to reflect on the nature of regional PCRD initiatives and their links to the AU PCRD framework; strategic visions and goals of the AU, RECs/RMs, the Civil Society, and relevant stakeholders on PCRD; progress, opportunities and challenges of implementing PCRD activities by RECs, the AU and other relevant partners. The deliberations focused on ways and means of addressing the five main issues that the APSA Roadmap 2016-2020 identifies as hindrances to the AU's PCRD implementation efforts, namely: (1) the complexity of post-conflict issues and the demanding resource requirement, (2) lack of coordination within the AUC and between the AUC and the RECs to align relevant peace and security programmes, (3) understaffed and under-resourced PCRD Unit at the AUC, (4) low level of capacity of the RECs/RMs, (5) lack of shared learning between the RECs/RMs and the lack of alignment between regional peacebuilding objectives as well as national stabilization plans. It also provided the AUC and the RECs/RMs the opportunity to proactively explore practical ways of operationalizing the concept of complementarity and subsidiarity.

In this regard, the Workshop, that was attended by representatives of the Government of Zimbabwe, AU Commission, RECs/RMs, AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), regional Civil Society organisations, and the Training for Peace partners, called for bi-annual meetings between the AUC and the RECs/RMs on PCRD – one at a technical level, and the second at the political decision-making level to foster better cohesion in enhancing coordination on PCRD implementation at sub-regional levels. It also agreed on a Guideline Notes for enhancing collaboration and coordination between the AU, RECs/RMs, Member States, Civil Society and other actors.