



PRESS RELEASE

CONSULTATION BETWEEN THE AFRICAN UNION AND JAPAN ON PEACE AND SECURITY ISSUES

The AU Peace and Security Commissioner completes a two-day visit to Japan

Addis Ababa, 6 March 2015: The Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union (AU), Ambassador Smaïl Chergui, completed today a two-day visit to Tokyo to discuss peace and security issues of mutual concern, as part of the AU-Japan partnership. The Commissioner was accompanied by senior officers from the Commission.

During his visit, the Commissioner met with various officials and dignitaries, including Mr. Yasuhide Nakayama, State Minister for Foreign Affairs; Gen Nakatani, Defense Minister; Mr. Norio Maruyama, Director General of the African Affairs Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Mr. Takashi Ashiki, Ambassador for the Middle East and North Africa; Mr. Tsukasa Kawada, Ambassador in Charge of Countering Terrorism and Organized Crime and Mr. Ichiro Aisawa, Member of the House of Representatives and President of the Japan-AU Parliamentary Friendship Association.

The discussions and interaction focused on several issues of common interest and concern, including the AU efforts in support of peace and reconciliation in Somalia, Mali, Libya, Central African Republic and South Sudan. The role of the AU in Peace Support Operations and its contribution to international peace and stability also featured prominently in these discussions, including the operationalization of the African Standby Force (ASF) and the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises (ACIRC).

Other issues that were highlighted and discussed in depth include regional and international efforts to counter terrorism and transnational organized crime. In this regard, the Commissioner informed his interlocutors on the ongoing effort in support of the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF) to counter the threat of the terrorist group Boko Haram and other efforts being undertaken by the AU to strengthen collaboration and coordination between Member States in combating terrorism and transnational threats as well as address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism. In this regard, the two parties underlined the importance of the immediate operationalization of the MNJTF with a predictable and sustained support from the United Nations and the international community. They also agreed to scale up their cooperation in the fields of counter and de-radicalization as well as countering the use of the internet for terrorist purposes.

The Commissioner also visited the Japan Peacekeeping Training and Research Center and received a presentation on the activities and achievements of this Center. The visit allowed for interaction on how to build closer collaboration between the Center and the AU Peace Support Operations in capacity building and exchange of technical expertise.

The Commissioner recognized the importance of Japan's partnership as a proactive contributor to peace, and expressed gratitude for its support to the AU peace and security agenda and other issues of mutual concern, including in containing the Ebola Disease Virus.

Both sides explored further areas for cooperation and collaboration and agreed on a number of practical steps to deepen the AU-Japan partnership, including within the context of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD).