



SECOND STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING FOR THE PROJECT “BUILDING AFRICAN UNION CAPACITIES IN SECURITY SECTOR REFORM”

Addis Ababa

17 December 2013

Welcoming notes by

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Head of Defence and Security Division

Chair of the Steering Committee Meeting

Distinguished Members of the Steering Committee and invited guests,

On behalf of the African Union Commission, let me start by welcoming you to Addis Ababa, and to the second steering committee meeting for the project **“Building African Union Capacities in Security Sector Reform – A Joint United Nations/ European Union support action”**. I would like to extend a special welcome to representatives from Netherlands and Norway that are here, as observers and hopefully soon, as members of the Steering Committee for this project.

Let me also take this opportunity to thank all our partners for your efforts to ensure the implementation of this project.

Distinguished participants,

We are gathered here today for the second time and after five (5) months from our first steering committee meeting that took place in New York on 8 July 2013. During that meeting we had the opportunity to adopt the Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure for the Steering Committee and to discuss progress made regarding the implementation of the project. We also decided that the AUC would develop a Code of Conduct for AU peace support operations, while the ASSN will develop a guidance note on codes of conduct for African security institutions. The AUC was also tasked to develop a guidance document for the conduct of joint assessment missions specifically for this project. During the course of this meeting we will get a briefing on progress regarding these decisions.

Distinguished participants,

I would like to mention that, the AU SSR project is a good example of the international partnership for the promotion of SSR in Africa. Indeed, it will greatly improve AU capacity to engage in SSR activities in support of Member States. The international partnership around this common initiative is crucial for the effective implementation of the AU Policy Framework on SSR, adopted by the AU Assembly in January 2013.

Already, the AU has deployed SSR experts to the Union of the Comoros and to the Central African Republic, thanks to the SSR capacity provided by the project. The AU is looking forward to assisting more Member States with their SSR needs.

Just recently in November 2013, we had the opportunity to meet in Addis Ababa to comment and discuss the first set of 3 important draft documents that will contribute to the operationalization of the AU policy framework on SSR. The 3 documents are: (i) the AU Operational guidance note on Gender and SSR; (ii) the AU Operational guidance note on conducting SSR needs assessment missions and (iii) the guidance note on the development of Codes of Conduct for African Security Institutions. We will get an update from ASSN on progress towards the finalization of these documents.

Distinguished participants,

Although the project is generally going well, there are a few challenges that we need to address mainly the need for the Steering Committee to agree on

guidelines for joint assessment missions to enable the implementation of assessment missions indicated in the project document.

Also, project activities should not be stand-alone activities, but should be part and parcel of the wider African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA).

Distinguished Members of the Steering Committee and invited guests,

The AU SSR Capacity Project is an important contribution to facilitate AU SSR work in post conflict situations, which are central to the realization of the Common African Defense and Security Policy (CADSP) and is part of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA).

With these few words, I hope that we will have a fruitful meeting that will guide AU SSR activities for 2014.

Thank you for your kind attention.