



MEDIA ADVISORY:

8th African Union Retreat on the Promotion of Peace, Security and Stability in Africa

Representatives of the media in N'Djamena are invited to cover the opening ceremony of the 8th African Union Retreat on the Promotion of Peace, Security and Stability in Africa

What: The African Union (AU) will convene its 8th Retreat on the Promotion of Peace, Security and Stability in Africa on, “The Emerging Global Order, Multilateralism and Africa”.

The two-day discussions which will focus on Africa’s quest for global and regional cooperation in addressing the world’s challenges, including in matters of peace and security, will examine Africa’s critical role in setting and implementing the global agenda.

Panellists will reflect on what multilateralism means for Africa; a Common African Position which upholds a strong sense of shared identity – nurtured by a history of Pan-African sensibility and activism – by common interests in resolving the continent’s problems, and by shared aspirations for political, social and economic transformation. They will also examine a spectrum of challenges that Africa faces – including conflict, humanitarian and environmental stresses – that will best be overcome with multilateral action. Discussions will zoom in on the need for the AU and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to act in a stronger and more coordinated manner to prevent and resolve internal and inter-state conflicts across Africa. They will also examine the need to engage not only higher-profile mechanisms such as the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC), but also wide array of institutions and collective instruments of soft power such as the Pan African Parliament, the Panel of the Wise, the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC) and the African Court of Justice and Human Rights (ACJHR), that protect Africa’s broader economic, societal and environmental interests.

When: 9:00 am CAT, Tuesday 24 October 2017;

Where: Hilton Hotel, N'Djamena, Chad;

Who: Participants will include sitting and former Heads of State, the Chairperson of the Commission, Senior Statespersons from African countries, Members of the AU Panel of the Wise, Senior leadership of the United Nations system, Special Envoys and Representatives from the AU and RECs, the UN and the EU, bilateral partners and distinguished academicians.

Why: The multilateral global order is suffering a crisis of confidence. It was rocked by unilateral military action by its most powerful member states, in Iraq and Ukraine, and in Libya the principle of the ‘responsibility to protect’ was abused. On the other hand, humanitarian principles have been rejected outright by militant extremist groups such as ISIS and Al-Shabaab, and undermined by some aid donors that use emergency aid as a political instrument. Most recently, multilateralism has been sent into reverse by Brexit, and the US withdrawal from the Paris Agreement on climate change mitigation in June 2017, along with cuts in the US contribution to the UN budget. President Donald J. Trump’s security and economic advisors have written: ‘The president embarked on his first foreign trip with a clear-eyed outlook that the world is not a “global community” but an arena where nations, nongovernmental actors and businesses engage and compete for advantage... Rather than deny this elemental nature of international affairs, we embrace it.’ However, at this historic moment, many EU leaders have reaffirmed their commitment to multilateralism, while the Chinese leadership has re-asserted its readiness to champion contemporary globalization processes.

Where does this leave Africa? The African Union, as the continent’s foremost multilateral organization, is obliged to provide leadership for Africa as it faces the challenges of a contested multilateralism in the 21st century. In particular, the AU should lead in the systematic analysis of the current crisis and its trajectory, exploring the kinds of multilateralism that will best serve Africa’s interests, particularly in the arena of conflict prevention and resolution. Such analysis would inform certain concrete actions on the Continent, especially with regards to its agenda for “Silencing the Guns by 2020”, peace-making and conflict prevention. Africa’s multilateralism requires the AU and RECs to act in a stronger and more coordinated manner to prevent and resolve internal and inter-state conflicts across Africa.

For more information please contact:

Ms. Yvette K. Ngandu

Coordinator of the Retreat

Mobile: +251-912-140316

Email: ngandu@hotmail.com or NganduK@africa-union.org

Mr. Paschal Chem-Langhee

Communication Officer

African Union Commission

Mobile: +251-929487749

Email: chem-langheep@africa-union.org

African Union (AU)

Peace and Security Department- Conflict Management Division

Tel. No. : +251-115-513 822 ; Fax: +251-115-519 321

E-mail: situationroom@africa-union.org or situationroom@ausitroom-psd.org

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