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PRESS RELEASE

Convening of the First Meeting of the Ad-Hoc Committee on the Establishment of the African Mechanism for Police Cooperation (AFRIPOL)

Addis Ababa, 2 July 2014: The first meeting of the Ad-Hoc Committee on the Establishment of the African Mechanism for Police Cooperation (AFRIPOL) was held at the African Union (AU) Headquarters, Addis Ababa, on 2 July 2014. The meeting was organized in implementation of the Algiers Declaration on the Establishment of AFRIPOL, issued by African Police Chiefs and Directors General, during their meeting in Algiers on 10-11 February 2014 and endorsed by the 23rd AU Summit held in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, on 20-27 June 2014.

Co-chaired by Algeria and Uganda, the meeting brought together Heads of Regional Police Chiefs' Organizations, including: the East African Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (EAPCCO), Central African Police Chiefs Committee (CAPCCO) and Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (SARPCCO). Representatives of the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) also participated in the meeting.

In his opening remarks, the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, Amb Smail Chergui thanked Algeria and Uganda for their commitment to the operationalization of AFRIPOL, and expressed the hope that the Committee would work towards the expeditious realization of the desired cooperation among national law enforcement agencies and the restoration of the rule of law in post conflict societies. ***"Africa is faced with border security challenges which are exploited by criminal cartels engaged in human, arms, and drug trafficking and contraband smuggling. The situation is further exacerbated by the growing presence of terrorist groups that find safe havens in the border regions from which they organize and launch their criminal activities. The establishment of AFRIPOL is a demonstration of the recognition by AU Member States of the shared burden of combatting transnational organized crime and terrorism,"*** the Commissioner stated.

The Co-chairs emphasized the urgent need for AFRIPOL to become operational and commended the AU Commission for taking swift action to implement the Algiers Declaration.

The next meeting of the Ad-Hoc Committee on the Establishment of AFRIPOL will take place in Kampala, Uganda, in October 2014.

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