



Remarks by H.E. Mr Jacob Zuma, President of the Republic of South Africa, at the Closing Ceremony of AMANI AFRICA II Field Training Exercise, Lohatla, Northern Cape, South Africa

08 November 2015

The Ministers of Defence from the Republic of Zimbabwe and Ministers from other countries in the SADC region,

The AU Commissioner for Peace and Security,

The Special Representative of the AU Commission Chairperson for Amani Africa,

Defence Force and Police chiefs,

The Force Commander for Amani Africa

Exercise participants from the Military, Police and Civilian Components,

Members of the diplomatic corps and representatives of International partners,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to join you at this landmark occasion in Africa.

Today we bring to a close a historic exercise that is moving Africa forward in the pursuit of peace, stability and security.

We welcome all of you to this ceremony.

As we conclude AMANI AFRICA II Field Training Exercise, we wish to extend our heartfelt condolences to the families of the late Sergeants Sello Steven Modisane and David Mokgele Motaung, who were participants in this exercise.

May the families find fortitude in the knowledge and memory of these gallant fighters who passed on in the service of their country and the continent.

Fellow Africans,



This exercise demonstrates that Africa is serious about peace and that the continent is also serious about investing in peace.

We often proclaim that we want African solutions to African problems. Through this exercise we are demonstrating that readiness to solve our problems in the continent.

We are indeed proud to proclaim today that Amani Africa 2 has been a tremendous success.

We have taken a significant step forward towards bringing the African Standby Force and its Rapid Deployment Capability into operation.

We have committed ourselves to Silencing the Guns on our continent by 2020, in alignment with our commitment to Agenda 2063.

However, we still need to be prepared to effectively intervene in situations of crises in order to stabilize our countries when the need and the call arises.

The reality is that some countries on our beloved continent are still experiencing conflict, strife and war.

The people of the Central African Republic, South Sudan, Mali, Libya, Somalia and eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo still live in the hope of achieving peace.

We therefore have a duty as the leadership of the continent to assist sister countries to achieve peace.

That is what makes this exercise so important.

It is particularly gratifying that the five regions of our continent were represented at this exercise through the regional economic communities (RECs) and their brigades.

SADC, the East Africa Standby Force, North Africa Regional Command, ECOWAS and the Volunteering nations of ACIRC (African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises) have all participated in this historic exercise, which is the first of its kind.

Apart from testing harmonisation, this exercise has gone a long way towards strengthening cooperation between the African Union and the regional mechanisms for the purposes of future peacekeeping operations.



This exercise is also unique in that it practised the Multidimensional nature of Peace Support Operations (PSOs) bringing together the military, police and civilian elements in an integrated approach.

In this regard, we congratulate the countries and regions that have been involved in this exercise for availing the necessary resources and assets.

We need to do more to mobilize domestic resources to fund and capacitate our peace support operations. Identifying and raising our own funds will ensure that we enhance the sustainability of our Missions while at the same time ensuring ownership and self-reliance.

Fellow Africans

Today is indeed a historic day in the quest for African peace and security.

We must build further on this milestone as we move towards full operational capability.

This exercise has also contributed significantly to consolidating the positive relationships, not only between the different Armed Forces, police and civilian components that were involved, but also between the home countries of these forces.

The opportunity presented by AMANI AFRICA II Exercise will also improve relations between the Regional Economic Communities and the African Union on continental level.

Indeed we are of the firm belief that the collective efforts of the military, police and civilian components will be invaluable in providing an effective and credible response to humanitarian crises on the continent.

We congratulate all the forces once again for this success.

We also commend the AU Commission for the leadership it provided at Strategic Headquarters level in Addis Ababa.

As we continue to build our capacity, we will also continue to cooperate with the United Nations and with international partners as well as we strive for continental and global peace.

Africa is proud of this achievement.

We wish the forces from sister countries a safe journey home.

I thank you.