



COMMUNIQUE OF THE CONSULTATIVE MEETING ON THE SITUATION IN MADAGASCAR

ADDIS ABABA, 22 JULY 2009

1. At the initiative of the Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union (AU), Mr. Jean Ping, and in line with the relevant decisions of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the AU and the decision on the activities of the PSC and the state of peace and security in Africa [Assembly/AU/Dec.252(XIII)], adopted by the 13th ordinary session of the Assembly of the Union held in Sirte, Libya from 1st to 3 July 2009, the International Contact Group on Madagascar held its second consultative meeting in Addis Ababa on 22 July 2009. The aim of the Contact Group is to better coordinate the efforts of the international community to promote the rapid return to constitutional order in Madagascar. In addition to the AU, this meeting was attended by the following organizations and countries: Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), European Union (EU), Indian Ocean Commission (IOC), International Organization of La Francophonie (OIF), Southern African Development Community (SADC) and United Nations. Libya, current chair of the AU; Ethiopia, in its capacity as the country chairing the AU PSC for the month of July 2009, as well as the African members and the permanent members of the UN Security Council also participated in the meeting. In the course of its deliberations, the Contact Group heard submissions from the heads of delegations of Ravalomanana and Ratsiraka political camps, who responded positively to the invitation extended by the AU to the four Malagasy political camps.
2. The Contact Group reviewed the developments in Madagascar since its meeting of 30 April 2009. In this regard, the participants reaffirmed the communiqué issued by the Contact Group following its inaugural meeting. They noted that the negotiations between the Malagasy political camps on the adoption of a Transitional Charter for a peaceful and consensual way out of the crisis in Madagascar, conducted by an international mediation team comprising the Special Envoys of the AU, SADC, UN and OIF, under the aegis of the AU, had recorded significant progress, before being suspended on 16 June 2009, because of a hardening of the positions of the parties. The participants expressed their appreciation to the Mediation for the efforts it deployed with the support of the local operational arm of the Contact Group, which held four meetings during the period under consideration.
3. The Contact Group welcomed the conclusions and decisions of the Extraordinary Summit of SADC Heads of State and Government on Madagascar, held in Sandton, South Africa, on 20 June 2009, which, in particular, urged all the stakeholders in Madagascar to commit themselves to a peaceful and negotiated settlement of the crisis. In particular, the Contact Group welcomed the appointment of former President Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique as the Head of the SADC Mediation Team in the crisis in Madagascar. President Chissano briefed the participants on the results of the mission he undertook to Antananarivo and Paris, from 9 to 20 July 2009.
4. The Contact Group took note of the position on the situation in Madagascar as contained in decision Assembly/AU/Dec.252(XIII) referred to above, in which the Heads of State and Government, *inter alia*: expressed their support for the elements for a way out of

the crisis as articulated by the Contact Group at its meeting of 30 April 2009; encouraged the Chairperson of the AU Commission to continue and intensify his efforts towards a speedy return to constitutional order, in close consultation with SADC, as well as with the United Nations, the OIF and the EU; and welcomed the appointment, by SADC, of former President Joaquim Chissano as the Head of its Mediation Team on the crisis in Madagascar.

5. The Contact Group also took note of the communiqué issued on 6 July 2009, following the consultation between the EU and the *de facto* Malagasy authorities, in the context of Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement, which, while stating that the "proposals and commitments of the Malagasy side remain in a non-constitutional framework, with no credible prospects for a return to constitutional order", calls for a consensual agreement for the return to constitutional order.

6. The Contact Group strongly condemned the acts of violence, especially those perpetrated over the past few days in Madagascar, as well as threats against journalists and media freedom. It warned extremists, whichever side they belong to, who are inflaming the situation and are, by their actions, undermining the search for a negotiated solution.

7. The Contact Group warned against any unilateral move to legitimize the unconstitutional change that occurred in Madagascar, including the organization by the *de facto* authorities of a national conference and elections without an inclusive political agreement, and firmly rejected any attempt to impose *faits accomplis*. The Contact Group urged the *de facto* authorities, as well as the other Malagasy parties, to place the interests of Madagascar and the search for a consensus above all other considerations, especially in light of the increasing risks of instability on the Island, as well as the continuing deterioration of the socio-economic situation, the resulting suffering being inflicted on the civilian population and the risk of jeopardizing existing agreements with the partners of Madagascar, including AGOA.

8. In light of the foregoing, and having reaffirmed the total rejection by their respective organizations and countries of the unconstitutional change that occurred in Madagascar and the communiqué of the Contact Group of 30 April 2009, the participants stressed the imperative of a rapid return to constitutional order, through a consensual process involving all Malagasy political actors and based on the respect for the relevant provisions of the Constitution of the country. They reiterated their commitment to work together to help all the Malagasy parties to achieve this objective, through the holding of free, fair and transparent elections, under the supervision of the international community.

9. More specifically, the Contact Group agreed on the following:

- (i) the convening, under the auspices of the AU, in Mozambique, during the first week of August 2009, at the latest, of a meeting between all the Malagasy political camps represented by their respective *chefs de file*, to reach a consensual solution for the rapid return to constitutional order and to resolve the outstanding issues following the suspension of inter-Malagasy negotiations, on 16 June 2009;
- (ii) the meeting will take place under the leadership of former President Joaquim Chissano, assisted by the SADC Mediation Team and the Special Envoys of

the AU, the UN and OIF, with the support of the other members of the Contact Group;

- (iii) the SADC Mediator, in close collaboration with the Special Envoys of the AU, the UN and the OIF, will work out modalities for a preparatory mission to Madagascar, next week, to facilitate the smooth and successful conduct of the meeting of the *chefs de file* of the Malagasy camps, and will liaise with all the Malagasy parties, both within and outside Madagascar.

10. The Contact Group encouraged the PSC to remain actively seized with the situation in Madagascar and, in accordance with its earlier decisions and relevant AU instruments, including the Lomé Declaration, to take the measures provided for to this end if, at the expiration of six-month period stipulated by the Declaration, there is no significant progress towards the return to constitutional order.

11. The Contact Group urged the international community to continue to provide humanitarian assistance to alleviate the difficult living conditions being endured by the Malagasy populations and aggravated by the current political situation.

12. The members of the Contact Group agreed to continue to work together under the auspices of the AU and to support its efforts to promote an early settlement of the crisis and the return to constitutional order in Madagascar. They agreed to hold their next meeting at a time and place to be determined based on the progress that would have been made in the mediation process.

Addis Ababa, 22 July 2009