

AFRICAN UNION

الاتحاد الأفريقي



UNION AFRICAINE

UNIÃO AFRICANA

Addis Ababa, ETHIOPIA P. O. Box: 3243 Tel.: (251-11) 551 38 22/ ext. 615 Fax: (251-11) 551 93 21/ 5514227
Email: situationroom@africa-union.org

Statement by Ambassador Ramtane Lamamra, Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, at the UN Security Council debate on the Report of the Secretary-General on UN Support to AU Peacekeeping operations authorized by the Security Council, New York, 22 October 2010

Mr. President,

Mr. Secretary-General,

I am pleased to address the Council, for a second consecutive day, to provide an African Union perspective on issues of common concern. That the Security Council agreed to hold back-to-back meetings on Somalia and on the United Nations support to the AU when it undertakes peacekeeping operations and, more generally, on the partnership between the world body and the AU bears testimony to the commitment of your august organ to the promotion of lasting peace and security in Africa. On behalf of Chairperson Jean Ping and the AU as a whole, I salute, again, Uganda, which is presiding over the Council this month, for its leadership and for the many sacrifices that it has made in pursuit of our objective of a conflict free-continent, especially through its participation in the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), undoubtedly one of the most challenging operations ever undertaken by our continental organization.

Yesterday, we debated on the situation in Somalia and the urgent actions needed from the international community, and singularly from the Security Council, to meet the challenges arising from current developments in that country and extend to the Somali people the support they desperately need as they strive to put behind them the two-decade long conflict that has torn their country apart.

In fairness to the United Nations and the larger international community, we are not starting this journey from scratch, for the UN is at the forefront of those providing the financial, logistical and technical support required for AMISOM to fully discharge its mandate. It is only fitting for me to reiterate our appreciation to the United Nations for its

1

invaluable support package to AMISOM, which ushered in a new era in the relationship between it and regional organizations, particularly the AU. I also would like to take this opportunity to renew our gratitude to South Africa, which initiated the process that led to the Prodi Panel report and has, since, continued to work tirelessly towards the effective follow-up of the recommendations contained therein. We, at the African Union, are pleased that South Africa is rejoining the Council, for its presence in this organ and long-standing commitment to peace will inject added momentum to the efforts aimed at making the partnership between the UN and regional organizations more relevant to the current challenges and environment.

Yesterday's discussions and today's debate are intertwined. In many respects, our joint undertaking on Somalia offers a template of how the AU-UN strategic partnership should evolve, if our efforts at addressing the challenges of peace and security in Africa are to succeed.

Mr. President,

Less than two years ago, the Prodi Panel, jointly established by the AU and the UN in a spirit of renewed partnership, submitted a forward-looking report on how best to enhance the relationship between the African Union and the United Nations, based on a judicious combination of their respective comparative advantages. To buttress the proposed approach, the Panel pointed out that, while African peacekeeping missions have demonstrated aptitude for rapid deployment that provides the initial stability needed for a longer-term solution, the lack of capacity and other resources hampers their ability to effectively implement their respective mandates over extended periods of time. The Panel suggested a number of practical steps to further coordination and collaboration between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council, as well as between the UN Secretariat and the AU Commission. It identified ways of developing an institutional capacity commensurate with the demands placed on the AU. On the enhancement of the predictability, sustainability and flexibility of financing of United Nations-mandated peace operations undertaken by the African Union, it recommended the establishment of new financial mechanisms, based on UN assessed contributions. Beyond these specific steps, the Panel stressed the need for a shared strategic vision, to enable the UN and the AU to exercise their respective advantages, but also to reduce the likelihood of duplication of effort and organizations working at cross-purposes.

Since the submission of the report, significant progress has been made towards the implementation of the recommendations that were formulated. I would like, at this juncture, to most sincerely thank the United Nations Secretary-General for his report, which provides an exhaustive picture of what has been achieved, and the challenges ahead.

Allow me, in particular, to highlight the ever-close working relationship between the AU Commission and the UN Secretariat. On many issues of mutual concern, we endeavor, at various levels, to consult with each other and, to the extent possible, to harmonize our positions. In this respect, the launching, here in New York, on 25 September 2010, of the

Joint AU/UN Task Force on Peace and Security truly marked a milestone. The presence of both Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Chairperson Jean Ping at the launching of the Task Force, which convened its first substantive session a few days later, was a testimony to the commitment of the leadership of the two organizations to deepening the AU/UN partnership. It is also worth mentioning the upgrading and streamlining of the United Nations presence in Addis Ababa, through the establishment, since July 2010, of the UN Office to the AU; the capacity building support provided to the AU in a number of areas; and the increased coordination on the ground between representatives of the two organizations.

The convening, in Cairo, last August, at the initiative of the AU Commission, and within the framework of the Year of Peace and Security, of a retreat bringing together Senior Officials and Envoys/Representatives of the AU and the UN, as well as from other partner organizations and countries, gave a new impetus to the ongoing efforts aimed at ensuring a more effective coordination and harmonization at both strategic and operational levels. In the *Cairo Call for Peace*, adopted at the end of the meeting, the AU was encouraged to organize another retreat next year and to institutionalize this forum thereafter, while, at the same time, working with the United Nations to ensure an effective follow-up to the steps agreed upon, including the establishment of regional fora of mediators in support to the quest for peace, security and stability in Africa.

This partnership also involves the policy-making organs of the AU and the United Nations. That the Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council have now institutionalized their yearly consultative meeting is a further indication of the shared awareness that the achievement of lasting peace and security in Africa requires that we pull our resources together and harmonize our positions, building on a creative reading and interpretation of the provisions of Chapter VIII of the UN Charter.

Even on the more challenging issue of the funding of AU-led peace support operations, progress has been made, though more slowly than Africa expects. The support package rendered to AMIS, before its transformation into a hybrid operation, and now to AMISOM, are indicative of a more innovative approach to peacekeeping and the challenges associated to it. I cannot agree more with the observation contained in the Secretary-General's report that the logistic support package financed through UN assessed contributions has been a key factor in the operations of AMISOM. With UNAMID, we have gone a step further, joining our efforts in an unprecedented hybrid operation, funded and managed by the UN. In so doing, our two organizations have demonstrated a capacity to respond with the required flexibility and pragmatism to complex political realities.

The African Union welcomes the joint AU – UN lessons learned exercise, planned in Nairobi for mid-November 2010, to study these experiences, as requested by the Security Council in its presidential statement of 26 October 2009. It is critical that the lessons drawn be applied and that they inform future decisions by our two organizations.

Mr. President,

As we meet today, we ought, therefore, to be proud of what has been achieved, for this provides a strong platform for further progress in our joint endeavor. At the same time, we should remain mindful of the many challenges that lie ahead, which require a greater and more focused mobilization from all stakeholders.

While, as indicated earlier, the AU Commission and the UN Secretariat have enhanced their collaboration, there is room for significant improvement. This requires an action-oriented approach geared towards achieving tangible results; it also requires that, at all levels, we fully embrace the spirit of partnership we have committed ourselves to, and that we remain relentless in our determination to make collaboration and coordination a permanent feature of our relationship, so as to avoid duplication of efforts and waste of scarce resources, maximize our impact, and be of better help to those in need of assistance. I trust that the Joint Task Force will provide us with the required tools to precisely see to it that the commitments made at the highest level are implemented and that the conclusions of the coordination meetings we regularly convene are followed through.

It is also important to make sustained efforts to enhance the effectiveness of the relationship between the UN Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council. There are many steps that could immediately be taken to this end, ranging from regular consultations between their respective Chairs, to harmonize their agendas and ensure a closer coordination and better synchronization in terms of decision-making, to joint field missions and more substantive discussions at the yearly meetings between these two organs, the latter requiring that the time and attention needed be allotted.

Mr. President,

I cannot conclude my remarks without addressing the issue of funding of AU-led peace support operations. As you are all aware, this issue is of particular importance for the AU, having been discussed on several occasions by our highest decision-making body, the Assembly of Heads of State and Government.

Over the past few years, the AU has demonstrated renewed determination and willingness to deploy peace support operations to: help stabilize fragile environments, where, more often than not, there is no clear-cut distinction between a continuing conflict and a situation where there exists a peace to be kept; provide the much-needed backing to forces of peace, as they battle to keep the upper hand over those bent on pursuing hostilities for narrow and short-term gains; and create conditions for sustainable peace and long-term recovery, including through the deployment of UN operations. Significantly, AU's deployments on the ground are labeled as peace support operations, and not peace-keeping operations. In Burundi and Sudan, yesterday, and in Somalia today, the AU, we believe, has demonstrated the validity of this approach.

At the same time, we are faced with serious resource, logistical and capacity constraints, which have hampered the ability of the operations deployed to fully discharge their mandated tasks and achieve their objectives. Yet we have no doubt that the risks inherent to such undertakings were worth taking, not only to seize upon the opportunities that presented themselves for the advancement of peace, and we feel vindicated by the experience in Burundi, but also to fulfill our obligation and responsibility to protect vulnerable populations caught in deadly conflicts. In so doing, the AU, while fulfilling its own mandate and promoting the goals and principles enshrined in its Constitutive Act and other related instruments, is also acting on behalf of the Security Council.

Against this background, the importance of finding a lasting solution to the funding of AU-led peace support operations cannot be over-emphasized. Time and again, experience has demonstrated that support using UN assessed contributions is the most viable response to the challenge at hand, especially when the operations concerned, as is the case for AMISOM, are undertaken with the consent of the Security Council.

Therefore, I would like to reiterate the AU's call to the Security Council and the United Nations in general to approach this issue with the urgency and flexibility required, building on the support packages extended to AMIS and AMISOM and other relevant experiences, in line with its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Clearly, this responsibility should be exercised in full, including when it comes to its financial implications.

Mr. President,

As the Secretary-General rightly pointed out in his report, "the complex challenges of today's world require a revitalized and evolving interpretation of Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter", based on the recognition that support by the United Nations to the regional organizations in matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security is an integral part of collective security as provided for in the UN Charter. Making peace happen in Africa, a continent which, in spite of the significant advances made over the past years, still accounts for the highest proportion of conflicts worldwide, requires no less from the world body and its relevant decision-making organ on peace and security matters.

We need an enhanced and innovative partnership to meet today's challenges and endow ourselves with the required capacity to confront the uncertainties of tomorrow. We need to demonstrate leadership and vision, in order to take the bold steps that the changing international landscape demands. We need to guard ourselves against the deceptive comfort that *status quo* offers, for it erodes our capacity to explore innovative solutions and better anticipate the future. I have no doubt that the Security Council will successfully navigate through the challenges at hand.

On its part, the AU is determined to fully play its role, consistent with the provisions of Chapter VIII of the UN Charter. We will pursue the efforts initiated to enhance our capacity and accelerate the full operationalization of the African peace and security

architecture - the ongoing AMANI training exercise to test the African Standby Force procedures and the APSA study assessment are clear illustrations of our determination to press ahead in this area; improve financial management and transparency; and raise more resources from within the continent, including through innovative partnerships with the private sector and civil society, as part of the follow-up to the Year of Peace and Security. We will endeavor to make conflict prevention, in particular structural prevention, a centerpiece of our action, making effective use of the relevant APSA components and building on our solid normative framework on issues relating to governance, human rights, democracy, disarmament and arms control, border management, to list but a few. We will step up our efforts to resolve existing conflicts, while consolidating peace where it has been achieved in order to prevent the relapse into violence.

I would like to, once again, express our most sincere gratitude to the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, for his tireless efforts and unflinching commitment to the cause of peace and security in Africa and in the world as a whole. His excellent report deserves our credit, for it not only eloquently articulates the challenges facing us and the steps we need to take, but also gives due recognition to the progress achieved by the AU in the implementation of its reform agenda in the area of financial and administration management, as well as to the contribution it is making to the achievement of our common goal of a continent at peace with itself and with the rest of the world.

I thank you.