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**AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION APPOINTS ADVISORY COUNCIL AND PEACE AMBASSADORS TO  
PUSH FOR PEACE IN AFRICA**

*Advisory Council and Peace Ambassadors drawn from multiple sectors and multiple regions*

*Appointees declare they are ready to make peace happen*

*AU utilising multi-stakeholder approach towards peace and security in Africa*

**Addis Ababa, 16 July 2010:** The Commission of the African Union (AU) today announced the appointment of 12 Advisory Council members and 14 Peace Ambassadors to support the implementation of the 2010 Year of Peace and Security programme. The announcement was made during the inaugural meeting of the Year of Peace and Security Advisory Council Members and Peace Ambassadors held at the African Union headquarters in Addis Ababa. The 26 are prominent Africans drawn from various sectors of society: political, business, sports, arts, culture and music.

The Advisory Council and Peace Ambassadors will support the Commission in conflict resolution and peace building efforts on the continent, advocating for the ratification and implementation of various AU instruments and commitments, including the *African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance*, mobilising resources, generating popular support and awareness, implementing specific activities developed by the Commission such as encouraging businesses to sign the Make Peace Happen Industry Charter, encouraging schools to use the Make Peace Happen Lesson Plan. They will also play a key role in the implementation of various activities leading up to and on Peace Day.

Speaking during the official opening of the meeting, AU Commission Chairperson Jean Ping said:

*"In order for the Year of Peace and Security to be successful, it is important that Africans take ownership and direct, as well as participate in the implementation of its programme. It is therefore an honour and privilege for us to have personalities of your continental and global stature being part of this historical initiative. The successes and courage you have demonstrated in your own fields of endeavour will serve as inspiration to all of us, as we collectively tackle the challenge our continent faces today: The Quest for Permanent Peace and Security."*

In attendance at the meeting were: H.E. Edem Kodjo, H.E. Salim A. Salim, H.E. Amara Essy, H.E. Bethuel Kiplagat, Ms Paulina Chiziane, Mr. Abedi 'Pele' Ayew, Ms Waris Dirie, Mr. Rabah Madjer and representatives of Dr. Graça Machel, Mr. Salif Keita, Mr. Youssou N'Dour and Mr. Michael Essien.

The meeting was scheduled to discuss the programme of work of the Advisory Council and Peace Ambassadors in the implementation of the Year of Peace and Security. The group affirmed their commitment to making peace happen in Africa in 2010 and beyond and their readiness to begin to engage various groups and institutions in the context of the Year of Peace and Security.

The AU Commission is implementing the Year of Peace and Security through a fresh multi-stakeholder approach, in line with one of the guiding principles of the implementation of the

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programme, that of inclusivity and partnership.

The inaugural meeting with the Advisory Council and Peace Ambassadors is to be followed by a joint meeting with humanitarian agencies to map out areas where they will be able to work together to distribute humanitarian supplies and materials on Peace Day (21 September).

END

## **Notes to Editors**

### **Advisory Council and Peace Ambassadors**

In order to mobilize the broadest support possible for the efforts being made, the Chairperson of the Commission decided to put in place a High Level Advisory Council made up of eminent African personalities from various sectors, to facilitate the mobilization of the required resources and political support, as well as assist in the implementation of specific activities.

In addition, the Chairperson also decided to appoint Peace Ambassadors, who are popular personalities drawn from various sectors, to galvanise popular support for the Year of Peace and Security and mobilize additional resources.

The Chairperson approached all African Nobel Laureates as well as former Organisation of African Unity Secretaries-General and African Union Commission Chairpersons and other eminent Africans to support the Year of Peace and Security in the capacity of Advisory Council members. Those who have accepted to serve to date are:

1. Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu
2. H.E. F.W. de Klerk
3. H.E. Salim A. Salim
4. Hon. Amara Essy
5. H.E. Alpha Oumar Konaré
6. H.E. Edem Kodjo
7. H.E. Henri Lopes
8. Dr. Graça Machel
9. H.E. Bethuel Kiplagat
10. Dr. Luisa Diogo
11. Dr. Mo Ibrahim
12. Prof. Wangari Maathai

The Chairperson approached notable African personalities in the area of sports, culture, music and the arts to support the Year of Peace and Security programme in the role of Peace Ambassador. Those who have accepted to serve to date are:

1. Manu Dibango
2. Sadok Sassi
3. Angelique Kidjo
4. Paulina Chiziane
5. Maria Mutola
6. Paul Tergat
7. Michael Essien
8. Oliver Mtukudzi
9. Waris Dirie
10. Abedi Pele
11. Teshaynesh Hewak Teka Legesse
12. Rabah Madjer
13. Youssou N'Dour
14. Salif Keita

Information regarding the Year of Peace and Security is available on [www.makepeacehappen.net](http://www.makepeacehappen.net)

## Year of Peace and Security in Africa

On 31 August 2009, the Heads of State and Government of the African Union (AU), meeting in Tripoli, on the occasion of the Special Session on the Consideration and Resolution of Conflicts in Africa, declared 2010 to be the Year of Peace and Security on the continent, proclaiming in paragraph 9 of the Tripoli Declaration:

*“We are determined to deal once and for all with the scourge of conflicts and violence on our continent, acknowledging our shortcomings and errors, committing our resources and our best people, and missing no opportunity to push forward the agenda of conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction. We, as leaders, simply cannot bequeath the burden of conflicts to the next generation of Africans”.*

The convening of the Special Session and the decisions taken, including the adoption of a Plan of Action, bore testimony to African Leaders’ renewed determination to give further impetus to the implementation of relevant AU decisions and to promote lasting peace, security and stability on the continent, for without such an environment the vision of the political and economic integration and development of Africa will not materialise.

During the AU Summit held in Addis Ababa in January 2010, all 53 African Heads of State and Government, or their representatives, reaffirmed their commitment to the Tripoli Declaration and the objectives of the Year of Peace and Security in Africa.

The overarching message for the Year of Peace and Security in Africa is **Make Peace Happen**.

The 2010 Year of Peace and Security in Africa campaign will centre on a single day, the International Day of Peace on 21 September (Peace Day). All Year of Peace and Security activities will lead up to and follow on from Peace Day.

Established by a UN resolution in 1982, Peace Day provides a unified rallying point for Africa to show that peace is possible. The AU is working towards a day when all Africans can experience peace simultaneously; the cessation of hostilities in conflict zones will allow for humanitarian relief, such as vital food, water, mosquito nets and other emergency supplies, to be provided to people living in those areas. It will help to create an unprecedented moment of collective unity that will highlight further the objectives of the Year of Peace and Security and establish a stronger platform for a conflict-free Africa.

The AU is encouraging Africans to take up several activities on Peace Day, such as:

- Utilisation of the Make Peace Happen Lesson Plan
- Organisation of football games
- Community work

The Year of Peace and Security in Africa is not just about one day. It is about mobilising all stakeholders to commit to action that makes peace possible on at least one day. After Peace Day a programme of education and awareness-raising and empowerment will continue beyond 2010 to enable Africans to continue to **make peace happen** in all their communities and nations.

## African Union, Peace & Security

The African Union is actively engaged in the promotion of peace in Africa. In 2002, it adopted a Protocol establishing the Peace and Security Council (PSC) as a standing decision-making organ for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. The Protocol provides for the

establishment of an African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), which, in addition to the PSC, includes the Continental Early Warning System, the African Standby Force, the Panel of the Wise, as well as the Memorandum of Understanding between the AU and the Regional Economic Communities. The overall aim of the APSA is to enhance the institutional capacity of the AU to address peace and security issues on the continent.

In the past few years, the AU has been actively engaged in peace efforts on the continent, through preventive diplomacy, mediation, deployment of peace support operations, and post-conflict reconstruction and development, including mobilisation of support for countries emerging from conflicts.

The AU also monitors electoral processes to ensure these are carried out within the guidelines agreed upon by Member States and has developed the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. Efforts are underway towards the early ratification of the Charter, which is one of the objectives of the Year of Peace and Security.

Furthermore, to address the root causes of conflicts in a holistic and systematic manner, the AU has adopted a number of instruments on human rights, governance, the rule of law, democracy, elections, disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation, terrorism, and good neighbourliness. These represent a consolidated framework of norms and principles, whose observance will considerably reduce the risk of conflict and violence on the continent and support the consolidation of peace.

#### **Year of Peace and Security activities (highlights of some events)**

-ECOWAS (March 2010)

Conference in Monrovia, Liberia, celebrating *“Two Decades of Peace Processes in West Africa: 1989 – 2009”*.

-EAC and Burundi (April 2010)

Ceremony for the destruction of arms in Burundi as part of commitments made to reduce small arms and light weapons.

-Swaziland (April 2010)

Flame of Peace lighting ceremony, as part of celebrations of King Mswatii III's birthday.

-Cameroon (May 2010)

Flame of Peace lighting ceremony, as part of 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of independence celebrations.

-Ghana (May 2010)

Flame of Peace lighting ceremony, as part of celebrations of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday.

-Burkina Faso (May 2010)

Flame of Peace lighting ceremony, as part of Africa Day celebrations and launch of Flame of Peace journey across Burkina Faso which will last until 11 December 2010, the 50<sup>th</sup> independence anniversary.

-Angola (May 2010)

Flame of Peace lighting ceremony, as part of Africa Day celebrations.

-South Africa (May 2010)

Flame of Peace lighting ceremony, as part of Africa Day celebrations.

-EAC in Tanzania (May 2010)

Ceremony for the destruction of instruments of violence in Bukoba, Tanzania, as part of Africa Day celebrations.

- Western Sahara, AU/MINURSO (May 2010)

Football tournament, as part of Year of Peace and Security/Africa Day celebrations.

-AU Permanent Missions in Geneva and New York, and AU Liaison Office in Sudan (May 2010)

Workshops on peace and security and other events, as part of Africa Day celebrations.

-Panel of the Wise and Democratic Republic of Congo (May 2010)

Flame of Peace Ceremony as part of Experts' Workshop and 8<sup>th</sup> Panel of the Wise meeting.

-Zimbabwe (May 2010)

Flame of Peace lighting ceremony, as part of Africa Day celebrations.

-Tunisia

Hosted a television debate on the Year of Peace and Security on Africa Day, has held a Flame of Peace lighting ceremony, and have developed a commemorative stamp for the Year of Peace and Security.

### **Other Year of Peace and Security partners**

GTZ is providing financial and technical support towards the implementation of the Year of Peace and Security in Africa.

Oxfam International Liaison Office, Addis Ababa, has lent its support to the make peace happen campaign, by aiding various communications efforts for the Year of Peace and Security.

Institute for Security Studies (ISS) has partnered with the AU Commission to make peace happen in 2010 and beyond, by supporting various outreach initiatives.

Organisation for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa (OSSREA) has committed to support the communication and other 2010 Year of Peace and Security activities.

Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) has committed to work with the AU to commemorate the 2010 Year of Peace and Security in Africa.

Kenya Airways is providing communication and financial support to the implementation of the Year of Peace and Security in Africa.

The Government of Italy is providing financial support towards the implementation of the Year of Peace and Security in Africa.

Ethiopian Airlines is providing transport and communication support to the Year of Peace and Security in Africa.