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PRESS RELEASE

AU INTENSIFIES ITS EFFORTS TOWARDS POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Preparations underway for the holding of an AU Solidarity Conference for African countries emerging from conflict

Addis Ababa, 14 September 2011. As follow-up to the technical meeting on post-conflict reconstruction and development in countries emerging from conflict, held in Addis Ababa, from 2 to 3 June 2011, the Commission of the African Union (AU) deployed two technical support teams to the Member States concerned.

In the course of August 2011, the team led by Soumana Sako, former Prime Minister of Mali, visited the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Central African Republic (CAR) and Burundi, while the other team led by Mr. Samuel Nyambi, a Senior Expert on Economic Governance and former UNDP Resident Representative, visited Liberia and Sierra Leone. Missions will also be undertaken shortly to the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan.

The task of the teams, amongst others, was to: (a) review the status of implementation of the recommendations of the multidisciplinary assessment missions undertaken to the concerned countries; (b) advise on the steps to be taken by the countries concerned, in their interaction with the international partners, taking into account the priorities identified during the technical meeting of 2 to 3 June 2011; and (c) provide updated reports to the Commission and recommend appropriate and practical follow-up measures to address post-conflict challenges.

Both teams met with Government representatives at the highest level, as well as partner organisations. The outcome of these technical missions will enrich the Plan of Action on a Support Program for Governance, Reconstruction and Consolidation of Peace, to be elaborated by the Commission and which will aim at mobilizing African expertise and resources. The Plan of Action is intended to flag the priorities of the countries concerned and to identify what the AU Member States, the Commission, including its Regional Offices/Specialized Institutions and other stakeholders could offer. The document will be presented at the African Solidarity Conference that is scheduled to take place in Addis Ababa, before the end of this year, and shall also serve as the basis for the engagement with the international partners in seeking their support and contribution.

It should be recalled that at its 230th meeting, which took place on 27 and 31 May 2010, the PSC considered the Report of the multidisciplinary mission deployed to assess the post-conflict reconstruction and development needs of the DRC and Burundi, from 21 January to 22 February 2010. In the communiqué adopted at the end of its deliberations, the PSC called on *"Member States and international partners to provide all necessary support to Burundi and the DRC, in order to facilitate the process of post-conflict reconstruction and development, as well as peacebuilding in both countries"*. The PSC requested the Commission to take all necessary measures to ensure the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the multidisciplinary mission, particularly through the *"organization of an African Solidarity Conference to give the opportunity for Member States to show their solidarity with Burundi and the DRC, within the framework of the AU PCRDR Policy."* The PSC also called for the *"intensification of advocacy efforts towards bilateral partners, international financial institutions, including the African Development Bank (AfDB), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and other stakeholders."*

It was on the basis of this decision that the Commission organized a two-day technical meeting on post-conflict reconstruction and development (PCRDR), from 2 to 3 June 2011, in Addis Ababa, and expanded it to include other countries in the post-conflict phase. The meeting provided an opportunity to review the status of implementation of the previous multidisciplinary missions to the Central African Republic (2006), Liberia and Sierra Leone (2009), and the Sudan, from 28 March to 10 April 2011, and its outcome set this process into motion.

Note to the Editors

About the AU Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development Policy

With the progress made in resolving the conflicts facing the continent, the AU saw the necessity to ensure that peace agreements were effectively complemented by sustained efforts towards post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding. It was against this background that the Executive Council, in 2005, urged the Commission to develop an AU Policy on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) based on the relevant provisions of the Peace and Security Council Protocol and the experience gained thus far. A good number of consultations took place and, in June 2006, the Executive Council adopted the AU PCRD Policy.

The PCRD Policy is intended to serve as a guide for the development of comprehensive policies and strategies that seek to consolidate peace and prevent relapse to violence, promote sustainable development and pave the way for growth and regeneration in countries and regions emerging from conflict. Given the peculiarities of each conflict situation, this Policy is conceived as a flexible template that can be adapted to, and assist, affected regions and countries, in their endeavours towards reconstruction, security and development.

Experience has shown that in the early phases of transition (from conflict to peace), peace processes remain fragile and the risk of resumption of violence high. This is because countries emerging from conflict are characterized by weakened or nonexistent capacity at all levels, destroyed institutions and the absence of a democratic culture, good governance, rule of law and respect for human rights, as well as underlying poverty. Furthermore, responses to post-conflict situations have, in the past, remained fragmented and largely ineffectual. The Policy Framework goes beyond such limited interventions, noting that post-conflict reconstruction and development activities do not stop with stabilization but seek to achieve long-term sustainable development as underpinned by the African vision of regeneration and growth.

The objective of the AU PCRD Policy is to improve timeliness, effectiveness and coordination of activities in post-conflict countries. More specifically, the Policy is a tool to: a) consolidate peace and prevent relapse of violence; b) help address the root causes of conflict; c) encourage and fast-track planning and implementation of reconstruction activities; and d) enhance complementarities and coordination between and among diverse actors engaged in PCRD processes.

The AU PCRD Policy is underpinned by the following five core principles: African leadership, national and local ownership, inclusiveness, equity and non-discrimination, cooperation and cohesion, and capacity building for sustainability.

The AU PCRD Policy has six indicative elements that are both self-standing and cross-cutting and represent the pillars upon which all PCRD efforts should be developed and sustained. These indicative elements are: a) security; b) humanitarian/emergency assistance; c) political governance and transition; d) socio-economic reconstruction and development; e) human rights, justice and reconciliation; and f) women and gender.



About the AU PCRD accomplishments

Over the past few years, the AU has been actively involved in efforts towards post-conflict reconstruction and development. In July 2003, the AU Executive Council established the Ministerial Committee for Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development for Sudan in anticipation of the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. The mandate of the Committee was to: assess, in consultation with the Government of Sudan and the Southern Peoples' Liberation Movement (SPLM), the needs and magnitude of the post-conflict situation in the Sudan; mobilize as much support as possible from within Africa; and sensitize the international community and other stakeholders on the post-conflict and reconstruction needs of the Sudan. The Committee has since undertaken a number of initiatives in support of post-conflict, including assessment missions on the ground, implementation of support programmes by its members and sensitization of international partners.

The AU has also dispatched multidisciplinary missions to CAR (2006), Liberia and Sierra Leone (2009), DRC and Burundi (2010), and the Sudan (2011), in order to assess and ascertain the magnitude post-conflict needs and priorities. The AU has been working to ensure support towards the full implementation of the recommendations of these missions. Among the key activities envisaged is the deployment of African expertise in needy post-conflict countries.

The AU has also raised funds to support quick impact projects (QUIPs) in countries emerging from conflict, including Liberia, Cote d'Ivoire, the Comoros and South Sudan. The importance of QUIPs lies in the fact that it has allowed the communities to benefit directly from the AU efforts and helps to give visibility to the AU at grassroots level.

As follow-up to the 67th meeting of the PSC, the AU Commission organized, in Addis Ababa, on 17 October 2007, the first African Solidarity Conference to mobilize support for post-conflict reconstruction in CAR from Member States. The AU also mobilized support from partners and participated at the highest level at the round table of development partners for CAR which took place in Brussels in June 2011.

In addition, the AU Commission has established Liaison Offices in countries emerging from conflict to facilitate follow-up of developments on the ground and interaction with all stakeholders on post-conflict reconstruction and development issues.

About the African Solidarity Initiative/Programme

The AU also is currently preparing for an African Solidarity Initiative which will be kicked off by a Solidarity Conference in support of the countries mentioned above.

The format would be designed to take into consideration not only financial contributions, but also pledges in human resources, experience sharing and in kind, with the active participation of Member States, the African private sector and relevant public enterprises.



This African Solidarity Initiative will seek to maximally mobilize the tremendous African capacity that has hitherto not been tapped in a laid down process that will involve NEPAD, ECA, African Development Bank and other key actors who are expected to lend their expertise in unlocking African potential for development and renewal in the post-conflict settings. An advocacy strategy and follow-up mechanism is envisaged to ensure that the pledges are timely honoured.