

**Joint Communiqué:
United Nations-African Union Joint Task Force on Peace and Security
holds 16th Consultative Meeting in Addis-Ababa**

Addis-Ababa, 15 February 2019 — The United Nations-African Union Joint Task Force on Peace and Security held its sixteenth consultative meeting at the African Union headquarters in Addis-Ababa on 12 February 2019.

The African Union (AU) Commission and the United Nations (UN) Secretariat were represented respectively by Commissioners Smail Chergui (Peace and Security), Minata Samaté-Cessouma (Political Affairs); and the Under-Secretaries-General Rosemary DiCarlo (Political and Peacebuilding Affairs), Jean-Pierre Lacroix (Peace Operations) and Hanna Tetteh (Special Representative of the Secretary General to the African Union). They were accompanied by other senior officials from the two Organizations including Under-Secretary General Bience Gawanas, Special Adviser on Africa to the United Nations Secretary-General and Ambassador Fatima Kyari Mohammed, Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations.

The meeting reviewed the status of the partnership between the UN and the AU. The Joint Task Force took note of the considerable progress achieved in the UN-AU partnership including the holding of the Second African Union-United Nations Annual Conference in Addis Ababa on 9 July 2018, the 12th UN-AU Consultative Meeting on the Prevention, Management and Resolution of Conflict (Desk-to-Desk) to be held in Addis Ababa on 11-12 March 2019, as well as the upcoming Third UN-AU Annual Conference. The meeting explored prospects for cooperation in support of the upcoming electoral processes on the continent and discussed the situation in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Central African Republic (CAR), Burundi, Mali and the Sahel region including the security situation in Burkina Faso and Niger. They also exchanged views on the situations in Libya, South Sudan and the Lake Chad Basin region.

In the review of the status of implementation of the UN-AU Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security, the Joint Task Force welcomed the cooperation between the two organizations in Madagascar and CAR as models of cooperation which offer useful lessons to inform future joint endeavours in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. The Joint Task Force acknowledged the increased mutual support to peace operations in Africa. In furtherance of this mutual cooperation, they explored the “Action for Peacekeeping” initiative to enable missions to be more effective, better equipped, safer and more robust. The Joint Task Force also underlined the need to jointly promote the full participation of Women in electoral and peace processes as well as peace operations, including at the leadership level.

The Joint Task Force welcomed the signing of the peace and reconciliation agreement in the Central African Republic on the 6 February 2019 by the Government of the Central African Republic and the 14 armed groups and congratulates all stakeholders for the successful conclusion of the talks that took place in Khartoum, Sudan. The Joint Task Force commended the leadership role of the African Union in the talks, which were carried out with the support and collaboration of the United Nations, within the context of the African Initiative for peace and reconciliation in the Central African Republic. The Joint Task Force underlined the need for continued engagement by all parties and called on neighbouring countries and all relevant international and regional partners for support in the implementation of the agreement reached for the stability of the Central African Republic and the region.

On the situation in the Great Lakes, they welcomed the peaceful elections and transition of power in the Democratic Republic of Congo whilst appreciating the need to redouble efforts to resolve the persistent security challenges in the eastern parts of the country. They welcomed the readiness of the Government of the DRC to work in collaboration with the UN to address the challenges facing the DRC. On the situation in Burundi, the Joint Task Force took note of the recent Summit of the East African Community (EAC) held in Arusha, Tanzania on 1 February 2019, and reiterated its support to the EAC-led mediation.

On the situation in Mali, the Joint Task Force was encouraged by recent progress in the implementation of the 2015 peace agreement, including the launching of an accelerated DDR process. The Joint Task Force called upon all stakeholders to sustain their commitment and accelerate the implementation of the measures under the Agreement. The Joint Task Force equally expressed concern about the deteriorating security situation in the centre of Mali and urged the Government to augment its efforts in addressing the increasingly complex situation, with the support of partners. The Joint Task Force noted the need for all international partners to continue to support MINUSMA. The issue of the establishment of a joint group to work on residual issues including inter communal violence was raised and can be a topic for further discussions.

On the Sahel, the meeting agreed to seek to enhance collaboration between AU High Representative for the Sahel, Mr. Pierre Buyoya, and Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas to explore ways of jointly supporting initiatives to prevent and resolve conflict and sustain peace in the Sahel. Regarding the G5 Joint Force, the meeting welcomed the resumption of its operations and called on international partners to provide it with necessary resources to implement its mandate. The meeting further appealed to the international community to honour the pledges made at the donors conference held in Nouakchott, Mauritania in December 2018 to address development needs.

The Joint Task Force expressed its continued engagement in support of the implementation of the peace agreement in South Sudan. The senior officials discussed the need for increased political and financial support to the peace process and underlined the importance of creating conducive conditions for the return of opposition groups before the commencement of the interim period of April 2019. They called for support of the international community to the R-JMEC and CTSAMVM to safeguard compliance with the R-ARCSS, especially the ceasefire. The senior officials welcomed the role played by IGAD in the peace process and took note of the holding of an upcoming IGAD Summit.

The senior officials also discussed the situation in the Lake Chad Basin region and expressed concern at the persistent attacks by Boko Haram, which continue to exert a heavy impact on civilians. They welcomed the endorsement by the AU Peace and Security Council of the Regional Strategy for the Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience of the Boko Haram-affected areas of the Lake Chad Basin. The AU and the UN reaffirmed their commitment to support the efforts of the Lake Chad Basin Commission in the implementation of the strategy and called on donors to honour the pledges made during the High-Level Conference on the Lake Chad Basin region in Berlin in September 2018.

The next statutory meeting of the Joint Task Force will take place in New York in September 2019, on the margins of the 74th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.