



PRESS STATEMENT

5th JOINT CONSULTATIVE MEETING BETWEEN THE EU PSC AND THE AU PSC

Brussels, 29 May 2012

The Political and Security Committee of the European Union (EUPSC) and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU-PSC) held their 5th Joint Consultative Meeting in Brussels, on 29 May 2012 in the context of implementation of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy. The meeting was co-chaired by Ambassador Olof Skoog, Permanent Chair of the EUPSC, and Ambassador Jacques-Alfred Ndoumbe Eboule, Chairperson of the AUPSC for the month of May 2012.

The meeting took place at a time marked by continued challenging developments in the Horn of Africa and grave political, security and humanitarian crises in some part of West Africa, highlighting the need for continued cooperation to achieve our common goals of ensuring peace and security, as well as promoting democratic governance, respect for human rights and rule of law. The discussions between the two parties, which focused on Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan, Guinea Bissau and Mali, reaffirmed the commitment of the AU-PSC and the EU-PSC to enhancing their joint efforts towards crisis prevention and resolution, and the importance of united responses to unconstitutional changes of Government.

1. On Somalia

The EU PSC and the AU PSC agreed that the current political process, based on the Djibouti Agreement, the Kampala Agreement, the Garoowe processes and the Political Roadmap, offers the best way towards the restoration of peace and security in Somalia. With less than three months to go to the end of the political transition in Somalia and in advance of the forthcoming Istanbul Conference on Somalia, the two sides call upon the Somali leadership to implement their commitments to ensure that the 20 August deadline is met and to tackle the pending issues aiming at finalising the transition in a transparent and inclusive manner with the active participation of all stakeholders. The EU and the AU welcomed the renewed commitment of Somali stakeholders at their meeting in Addis Ababa of 23 May to meet the deadline of 20 August 2012 to expedite the implementation of the pending transitional tasks. Both sides agreed that they would not accept any further extension of the mandate of the Transitional Federal Institutions (TFIs). Commending the achievements of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), they paid tribute to those African countries contributing police and troops to the Mission, as well as other forms of support including training, and recalled the continued substantial EU support to AMISOM and the training of Somali soldiers by EUTM Somalia. Both sides called upon other donors to continue increase their contribution to sustainable funding for AMISOM, underlined the importance of coordinated international efforts in the field of security, and agreed on the importance of assistance to AMISOM in further developing its capacity to protect civilians. As part of the EU's comprehensive approach to Somalia and the wider Horn of Africa region, the AU PSC welcomed the appointment of an EU Special Representative for the region, the contribution of the EU's maritime mission, EUNAVFOR Atalanta, to the fight against piracy and the EU's decision to deploy a new regional maritime capacity building mission, EUCAP Nestor. The EU PSC welcomed the development of an AU comprehensive Strategy on maritime security and safety.

2. On Sudan and South Sudan

The EU PSC reiterated the EU's full support for the AU Roadmap as unanimously endorsed by the UN Security Council, noting that it provides concrete steps with clear deadlines to end hostilities and for both countries to resolve their outstanding issues. The commitment to the Roadmap by both countries must be matched by actions on the ground and, in particular, the swift activation of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism, as well as full withdrawal of all Sudanese security forces from Abyei. Both Sudan and South Sudan must implement the AU Roadmap and all the provisions of UNSCR 2046 (2012) without conditions or delay. The two parties reiterated their support to the efforts of the AU High Level Implementation Panel, under the Chairmanship of former President Mbeki, to establish conditions for direct talks between Sudan and South Sudan, and welcomed the resumption of the talks on 29 May 2012, in Addis Ababa. The EU and AU PSCs stressed the need for both parties to refrain from any unilateral action that may ignite further confrontations, including aerial bombardment and cross-border incursions, and from supporting proxy forces and rebel movements in each other's territory. They expressed their deep concern about the humanitarian situation in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile, and recalled the AU/UN/League of Arab States initiative and urged the Government of Sudan to allow safe and unhindered access to humanitarian assistance without condition or delay.

The EU and AU PSC reiterated their support to the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD), and called on all parties to redouble efforts towards accelerating its implementation, especially in terms of concrete peace dividends for the people of Darfur, as well as the non-signatory movements to join the Doha peace process without further delay.

3. On Sahel and Mali

The AU PSC and the EU PSC reiterated their strong condemnation of the seizure of power by force in Mali and called on all parties to fully cooperate with the Transitional Government to agree on an inclusive roadmap for the full restoration of civil, constitutional order. They also strongly condemned the recent physical assault on interim President Dioncounda Traoré, which underlines the fragility of the political arrangements in place and the lack of effective control by the Government over the security forces. In this respect the two sides reaffirmed their determination to consider the use of sanctions against civilian and military spoilers who are undermining the authority of the transitional Government in Mali, and impeding the political process including through violations of human rights.

They welcomed the efforts of ECOWAS and reaffirmed their support to the region to consolidate a civilian led transition, including a national electoral process in Mali, within the twelve months transition. The two sides rejected the "declaration of independence made by the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad", which is null and void, as well as the joint declaration of the MNLA and Ansar Din of 27 May 2012 and reiterated their commitment to preserve the unity and territorial integrity of Mali. The EU renewed its readiness to consider support to AU and ECOWAS efforts towards preserving unity and territorial integrity of Mali and addressing the root causes of the situation.

Both sides strongly condemned violations of human rights in Northern Mali by rebel and armed and terrorist groups. The two parties welcome the AU's initiative to establish a Support and Follow-up Group on Mali and look forward to the holding of the first meeting in Abidjan on 7 June.

They reiterate the need to address the challenges facing the Sahel in a holistic manner covering security and political aspects, humanitarian assistance, food security and reinsertion of migrant workers and long-term development and follow up. In this context, they welcomed the AU Strategy as contained in the communiqué of the 20 March AU PSC ministerial meeting as well as the EU's decision to deploy a civilian security sector Mission to Niger this summer.

4. On Guinea Bissau

The EU and AU PSC reiterated their condemnation of the coup in **Guinea-Bissau** and their grave concern over the negative impacts of drug trafficking and organised crime on Guinea Bissau and the sub-region. In line with the AU communiqué of 24 April 2012, the EU Foreign Affairs Council conclusions of 23 April 2012 and UN Security Council Resolution 2048 (2012), they reaffirmed their demand for the immediate restoration of the constitutional order, the reinstatement of the legitimate democratic government of Guinea Bissau and the resumption of the interrupted electoral process. They recalled that the EU and UN have adopted individual restrictive measures against the leaders and supporters of the coup. Both sides reaffirmed the importance of concerted international action, including UN, AU ECOWAS, EU and CPLP with a view to restoring constitutional order, completing a genuine defence and security reform and fighting against drug trafficking and impunity.

5. On Regional Initiative against the LRA

The EU PSC and the AU PSC welcomed the operationalisation of the **AU regional initiative** - in particular the establishment of the Regional Task Force Headquarters and Joint Operations Centre - and, recalling EU support, encouraged the AU Special Envoy to pursue his efforts aimed at facilitating the implementation of this initiative.

6. On Counter-terrorism

The EU PSC and the AU PSC appreciated the existing cooperation on counter-terrorism and the EU – PSC reaffirmed support to the programmes and activities of the African Centre for Studies and Research on Terrorism.

7. On Coordination on global issues

The EU PSC and the AU PSC reiterated their commitment to **enhance coordination on global issues** on common interest in international fora and to continue their cooperation on the African Peace and Security Architecture. In this context, they welcomed the progress made in preparation of the second cycle of the Amani Africa exercise. The two sides recognised the need for predictable, flexible and sustainable funding for AU-led peacekeeping operations.

They agreed to continue close consultation and cooperation on all these issues and to meet again in Addis Ababa in 2013.