



## UN/AU: Strengthening Strategic Partnership in Africa

### Cooperation between the United Nations Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council



*UN Security Council and AU Peace and Security Council members during the 10th Joint annual meeting in New York*

The African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) and the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) marked the 10th Anniversary of their Joint Annual Consultations in May. The two Councils meeting was centered on their collaboration to restore peace and security in Somalia among the UN Support Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) and the African Union Mission (AMISOM). Others issues on their agenda was the Burundian crisis and development so far.

# UNOAU Mandate

## Background to the establishment of UNOAU

Since the transformation of the Organization of African Unity into the African Union (AU) in 2002, and in particular the 2004 launching of the AU peace and security architecture, there has been strong support among the UN and its Member States for closer United Nations cooperation with the AU. In 2005, the World Summit underscored the need to devote attention to the special needs of Africa. In follow-up to this Summit, Secretary-General Kofi Annan, in the 2006 Addis Ababa Declaration “Enhancing UN-AU Cooperation: Framework for the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union”, pledged the UN support for the development and strengthening of the AU Commission, focusing “with priority, on conflict prevention, mediation and good offices, peacekeeping and peace building”. In 2007, the General Assembly adopted resolution 61/296 on cooperation between the UN and the AU and requested the Secretary-General to take appropriate steps to strengthen the capacity of the Secretariat to meet the special needs of Africa.

By 1 July 2010, the United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU) was established by UN General Assembly Resolution 64/288. The Office integrated three existing offices: Department of Political Affairs (DPA) Liaison Office, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) AU Peace Support Team, and the Department of Field Support (DFS) Planning Team for Somalia to support the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), as well as the support component of the United Nations and African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) Joint Support Coordination Mechanism (JCM) office in Addis Ababa.

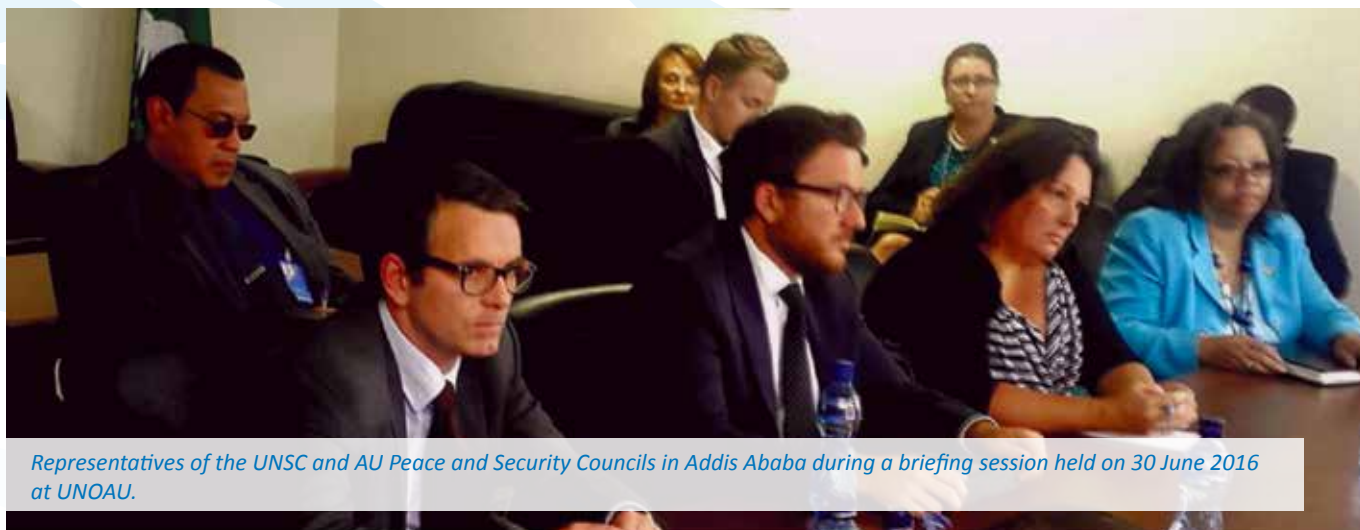
## UNOAU’s mandate is to:

- enhance the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union in the area of peace and security;
- provide coordinated and consistent United Nations advice to the African Union on long-term capacity-building and short-term operational support matters;
- streamline the United Nations presence in Addis Ababa to make it cost-effective and efficient in delivering UN assistance to the AU.

*(A/64/762, A/RES/64/288)*

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*Representatives of the UNSC and AU Peace and Security Councils in Addis Ababa during a briefing session held on 30 June 2016 at UNOAU.*

The United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU) role in support of this joint mechanism is to hold regular briefings for and consultations with representatives of members of the UNSC to the African Union and in Addis Ababa on African peace and security issues both Councils are seized with. To that end, on 30 June, representatives of members of the UNSC met with UNOAU to discuss developments in Somalia and in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The revision of the AMISOM Concept of Operations (CONOPs) and developments leading to elections in August 2016 dominated discussions. On the DRC, participants discussed the latest developments around efforts to facilitate a National Dialogue about elections and the African Union efforts in that regard, including plans to convene a Support Group to accompany the facilitation.

The partnership between the United Nations and the African Union in peace and security has come a long way in ten years with increased collaboration in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in Africa. Together, the UN and the AU are building a body of practice where coordination and harmonization of positions is increasingly becoming the norm, and our partnership is developing from an ad hoc reactive basis to a more planned strategic partnership. The collaborative work of the UN Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council is critical in guiding the work of the UN Secretariat and the AU Commission to be able to leverage our comparative advantages to manage conflict and promote peace on the continent.

## Women, Peace and Security Agenda

### It's time for action, it's time for impact

On the occasion of the commemoration of the first International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict (19 June), the African Union asks for collective action to condemn and end conflict-related sexual violence in Africa. This weapon of war inflicts immense physical and psychological injuries on women and children. In recent years, the African Union has developed a series of legal instruments and mechanisms to prevent violence, protect empower women and children; and politically engage AU member states. Prevention and protection became center part of the work of the AUC Special Envoy for Women, Peace and Security.



Gender-based violence becomes especially heinous when the perpetrators are the ones entrusted to protect the most vulnerable. Therefore, the AU has introduced a strict zero-tolerance policy on sexual and gender-based violence for its peace support operations (PSOs) to end impunity and to ensure accountability of troop-contributing countries and AU missions.

The UN and the AU conducted a series of workshops and consultations to enhance policies, guidelines and implementation procedures to ensure better prevention, protection, empowerment and accountability in the mandating, planning and management of PSOs. Recommendations and joint actions focus on the screening of personnel and leadership, the training of troops, investigation of violations, strengthening of accountability, monitoring of compliance, improvements in troop welfare and the broader human rights and protection challenges in mission settings.

## Planning together in the fight against the Lord Resistance Army

The Lord Resistance Army (LRA) also known as the Lord's Resistance Movement has been a rebel group and a heterodox Christian cult operating in the Uganda, South Sudan and the Central African Republic. It initially sought to establish a multi-party democracy with the Ten Commandments and Acholi nationalism as its key tenants. This could not materialize as the UPDF pursued and cleared its presence from Uganda. It escaped into the jungles of the mentioned countries and has since been involved in widespread human rights violations including murder, abduction, mutilation, child-



*Chief of staff of the AU Peace Support Operations Division, General Galaw (first right) addressing the 2nd Commandos of South Sudan Army in Yambo*



*Members of the team from AU, USA, EU and UNOAU*

sex slavery and forcing children to participate in hostilities. Its leader Joseph Kony is currently suspected to be hiding in Kaifi Kingi a disputed area between Sudan and South Sudan. Remnants of the LRA are also reported to be operating in the Garamba National Park in the DRC where it poaches elephants to obtain ivory for sale as well as carrying out illegal mining for gold and diamonds in Obo in the CAR

The UNOAU partnered the AU PSOD alongside with the EU and the USA to undertake a Technical Assessment Mission to LRA affected areas in the South Sudan (SS), Central African Republic (CAR) and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) from 20-25 June 2016. The mission was the ascertain the current state of affairs of the 4 year- AU-RTF Mission led by the Ugandan Peoples Defence



Forces(UPDF). The other TCCs of the AU- RTF are South Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo and Central African Republic. The assessment mission was triggered among other things by the notice given by the Government of Ugandan that it was going to withdrawal of the UPDF by ending of October this year.

The team assembled at Entebbe (Uganda) and proceeded to the AU-RTF HQ in Yambio (SS) where they were received and briefed by the Force Commander Brig Gen Lucky Kidega and his Staff Officers. The UNMISS liaison team were also present to brief the team. The team then moved to Obo (CAR) where they meet with the UPDF Contingent Commander, the US Special Forces Commander and the Prefect of Obo Prefecture. The team finally touch base with Dungu (DRC) where the FRI were deployed. There the team meet the MONUSCO Sector North Commander and other key actors in the region.

It will be recalled that on 22 May 2012 the AU authorized the deployment of an AU-RTF in areas affected by the LRA (notably the 4 mentioned countries) to eradicate the presence of the LRA and stabilize and provide the enabling environment for the provision of humanitarian assistance and development.

This mission is part of the many missions that the UNOAU has undertaken with the AU in line with its mandate to partner the AU areas of peace and security.

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## Knowing better UNOAU new Leadership



We are pleased to welcome Nathalie Ndongo-Seh as our new Chief of Staff. Ms. Ndongo-Seh is an attorney-at-law with wide-ranging United Nations peacekeeping experience. She has served in Liberia, Israel, Afghanistan, East Timor and South Sudan amongst other UN assignments, and was most recently posted in Burundi as Chief of Staff MENEUB and in UNMISS, Juba before joining UNOAU. Ms. Ndongo-Seh began her career in the private sector in France, Cameroon and Ivory Coast. A mother of two, Ms. Ndongo-Seh hails from Cameroon and was raised in France. She holds graduate a Bachelor's degree in Commercial law; a Master Degree in International law; and a post graduate Degree in International Economic law, all from Pantheon-La Sorbonne University, Paris, France.



Head of Political Affairs, Mr. Nicholas Shalita is the Chief of Political Affairs Section at the United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU). In this role he is responsible for building political partnerships with the AU Commission on peace and security as well as with African Union Permanent Representatives to the AU and the wider diplomatic community in Addis Ababa. He previously served as the Chief of the Darfur Internal Dialogue and Consultation process in UNAMID, where he led the planning, design and implementation of the internal political dialogue as part of the Doha Peace process. He also previously served as a Senior Political Advisor with the United Nations Support Office for AMISOM, and as a Senior Advisor to the President of the 62<sup>nd</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly. Prior to joining the UN, Mr. Shalita was Deputy Permanent Representative of Rwanda to the United Nations in New York, and before that was Director for Public Information at the Presidency in Kigali, Rwanda. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science, a Master's Degree in Diplomacy and International Affairs and a Diploma in Journalism.

## Upcoming Events

10-18 July 2016      27<sup>th</sup> African Union Extraordinary Summit, Kigali, Rwanda

### UNOAU Bulletin

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**UNOAU Bulletin** aims to increase visibility and awareness on UNOAU mandate and activities in relation with the African Union Commission, the Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms in the area of Peace and Security on the continent. It illustrates the political role that the United Nations is playing with the AU and other stakeholders on conflict prevention and management, peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

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