13. ASF/ACIRC: The JTF welcomed the progress achieved to date towards the operationalization of the African Standby Force (ASF) and welcomed the full operational capability reached by the East African Standby Force Coordinating Mechanism (EASFCOM) in November 2014. The JTF also welcomed the steps taken towards the operationalization of the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises (ACIRC) and the ongoing process of harmonization of both concepts. The JTF encouraged all concerned to take the necessary steps to ensure that full operational capability for the ASF is achieved by 2015. It called for sustained and focused international support. It therefore agreed to work towards the successful holding of the Amani Africa II Field Training Exercise in South Africa in the course of 2015 and other related activities as well as intensify strategic and institutional engagement towards enhanced coordinated support.

14. Elections: The JTF reviewed the upcoming elections in Africa scheduled for the period 2015/16. The JTF observed that a considerable number of African countries are holding critical national and sub-national elections, as well as constitutional referenda. The JTF noted the polarized political environment in which some of these elections are likely to take place, including debates on term limits and inclusiveness. The JTF took note of the high risk for election-related violence, and consequently emphasized the need for joint and/or coordinated analysis and assessment of pre-election situations to provide the basis for coordinated preventive diplomacy initiatives by the two organizations in order to ensure that these elections contribute to the advancement of democracy, as well as to the promotion of lasting peace and security. It acknowledged that a good basis for cooperation already exists in the various initiatives currently being undertaken by the AU, Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms, and the UN. The JTF stresses the importance of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance.

15. Follow-up: The JTF requested the relevant AU Commission and UN Secretariat Departments and offices to ensure follow-up on the conclusions of the meeting, including drawing up, within two weeks, an implementation plan with specific timelines. It agreed to convene regular meetings on the implementation of the agreed decisions as appropriate.
1. On 1 February 2015, the United Nations (UN) – African Union (AU) Joint Task Force (JTF) on Peace and Security held its 10th consultative meeting at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on the margins of the 24th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union. The AU Commission and the UN Secretariat were represented respectively by Commissioners Ismail Chergui (Peace and Security) and Amina Abouzeid (Political Affairs) and the Under-Secretaries General Jeffrey Feltman (Political Affairs), Hervé Ladsous (Peacekeeping Operations), and Haile Menkerios, UN Office to the AU. They were accompanied by other senior officials from the two organizations.

2. The JTF discussed issues of common interest and identified areas of collaboration in a number of countries, including in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Libya, Mali and South Sudan, Central African Republic (CAR), and the efforts to address the threat posed by the Boko Haram terrorist group. The meeting also discussed forthcoming elections in Africa and agreed on how to coordinate UN-AU actions in support of regional and national efforts to ensure the holding of smooth, credible elections that contribute to the consolidation of peace and security. Furthermore, the JTF agreed to continue to coordinate the implementation of peace agreements, based on the principles of shared responsibility, value addition and complementarity.

3. In that regard, the meeting welcomed the ongoing UN review of peace operations and progress in the operationalization of the African Standby Force (ASF) and the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises (ACIRC).

4. South Sudan: The JTF expressed its serious concern at the prevailing situation in South Sudan. It urged the parties to demonstrate the necessary commitment to end the bloodshed in the country and to the efforts of the UN and their own people. The JTF reiterated its support to the mediation led IGAD-led mediation and to the efforts of UNMISS on the ground and called on the South Sudanese government and other stakeholders to extend all the necessary cooperation to the UN mission in the country. It also discussed the situation of the conflict in South Sudan, Central African Republic (CAR), and the efforts to address the threat posed by the Boko Haram terrorist group. The meeting also discussed the forthcoming elections in Africa and agreed on how to coordinate UN-AU actions in support of regional efforts to ensure the holding of smooth, credible elections that contribute to the consolidation of peace and security.

5. Libya: The JTF expressed its concern at the prevailing security and humanitarian situation in Libya, as well as at the continuous political impasse and the resulting lack of effective security. It reiterated that only inclusive political dialogue would bring about lasting peace, security, stability and reconciliation. In this regard, the JTF expressed full support to the on-going UN-led mediation efforts and welcomed the outcome of the first round of the UN facilitated dialogue held in Geneva, from 14 to 15 January 2015, as well as the convening, since 26 January 2015, of the second round of the dialogue. The JTF also welcomed the efforts of the member countries, including the initiative by Algeria to convene a reconciliation conference bringing together all Libyan stakeholders, building on the outcomes of the Geneva process. The JTF underlined the need to establish a Joint Implementation Group for Libya (IG-L), and the convening of two meetings of the two-date joint AU/UN chairmanship. The AU and the UN agreed to work together to enhance the IG-L, in line with the sidelines of its 24th January 2015 meeting, among others to identify practical ways through which the AU can further contribute to the UN-led Mediation and assist in putting in place a ceasefire monitoring mechanism in Libya.

6. DRC and the Great Lakes Region: The JTF stressed the need to redouble efforts towards the effective implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation (PSC) Framework for the DRC and the Great Lakes Region. In that respect, the JTF welcomed the announcement made by the UN, the AU, and the UN, and the decision to deploy AU UN peacekeeping mission. The JTF noted the decision of the PSC on 29 January 2015, to defer consideration of the report of the AU Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan (AU/CS) to a later date. The JTF reiterated that, in order to ensure the successful implementation of the mission, the AU and the UN agreed to work together towards the establishment of the Joint Implementation Group and MONUSCO to neutralize the DFLRC by following the regional group voluntarily to disarm within the timeframe stipulated by the Security Council, the AU and countries of the region. The JTF urged all actors concerned to speed up the implementation of the Nairobi Declarations that concluded the Kampala Dialogue between the DRC Government and the M23. It welcomed the outcome of the first meeting of the PSC Framework Guarantors convened by the AU and the UN in Addis Ababa, on 2 December 2014, and encouraged the regular holding of such meetings. The JTF welcomed the close cooperation between the AU and the UN, and the support of the Great Lakes Region, and encouraged them to pursue their efforts and coordination. The JTF welcomed the outcome of the 5th meeting of the PSC Framework Regional Oversight Mechanism, held in Addis Ababa on 31 January 2015, and agreed to work together towards the implementation of the decisions adopted.

7. Mali & Sahel: The JTF expressed deep concern at the prevailing security situation in Northern Mali and recent tension on the ground. The JTF called on all parties to respect their ceasefire commitments by halting military operations and restoring calm through the effective implementation of the MNJTF. The JTF reiterated its full support to MINUSMA, and called on all stakeholders in Mali to extend the necessary cooperation with the Mission to effectively carry out its mandate as set by the Security Council, particularly its efforts to support the implementation of the ceasefire. The JTF took note of the conclusions of the Niamey meeting of MINUSMA’s African countries troop contributors, held on 5 November 2014, as well as the meeting of the AU and UN representatives of the African Union Ministerial Committee of the CEDEAO SUMMIT and the AU-UN ministerial meeting of 20 January 2015, as well as the upcoming elections. They agreed to continue supporting jointly, including in the framework of the G8-RC, efforts of all parties towards the implementation of the Brazzaville Agreement as well as the ongoing local consultation process and the Bangui Forum meeting.

8. The JTF reiterated the importance of the Bamako Ministerial Platform for the Sahel. The AU and UN, which provide the joint secretariat for the Platform, agreed to undertake consultations with Mali, as Chair, to enhance the effectiveness of this forum and its contribution to a coordinated implementation of the various Strategies on the Sahel. Furthermore, the JTF welcomed the convening of the Summit of the AU with the aim of relaunching the Berlin Conference in January 2015, and the AU-UN Ministerial Platform for the Sahel. The JTF reiterated its support to the Algiers Process, and urged the Malian parties to demonstrate their good faith and make the compromises necessary to quickly conclude the negotiations needed to establish the Implementation Group for Libya (IG-L), and the convening of two meetings of the two-date joint AU/UN chairmanship. The AU and the UN agreed to work together to enhance the IG-L, in line with the sidelines of its 14 May 2015 meeting, among others to identify practical ways through which the AU can further contribute to the UN-led Mediation and assist in putting in place a ceasefire monitoring mechanism in Libya.

9. The JTF welcomed the establishment of the International Contact Mechanism in Libya, in support of the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework, and looked forward to their continued coordinated efforts to enhance support to the IGAD mediation.

10. Central African Republic: The JTF noted the need for enhanced coordination and a unified approach among all stakeholders to promote peace in CAR in line with the outcomes of the conclusions of the 6th meeting of the ICG-CAR. The JTF called on all stakeholders to continue to lend support to the political process in the CAR, including the ongoing local consultation process and the Bangui Forum meeting, and the upcoming elections. They agreed to continue supporting jointly, including in the framework of the G8-RC, efforts of all parties towards the implementation of the Brazzaville Agreement as well as the ongoing local consultation process and the Bangui Forum meeting.

11. Lessons learned in transitions from AU to UN operations: The meeting welcomed the findings and recommendations of the Secretary-General’s Report of the UN-Security Council AU/UN Security Council Joint Ministerial Platform. The JTF noted that lessons learned in transitions from AU peace operations to UN peacekeeping operations in Mali and CAR. It further welcomed the spirit of cooperation between the UN and the AU in this process. The JTF agreed to develop jointly a transition toolbox to ensure a more coherent framework for AU to UN transitions and guide future transition processes. It also agreed jointly to conduct a lesson learned exercise to identify context specific benchmarks that could be used to determine whether or not a transition process should take place, given the needs in the country and the situation on the ground, as well as to review and provide an assessment of the various mechanisms available to improve the predictability, sustainability, and flexibility of jointly conducted AU peace operations authorized by the Security Council.

12. The JTF took note of the increasingly challenging realities facing UN peacekeeping missions, including transnational organized crime and an increasing trend of targeted attacks against peacekeepers, as well as stalled peace processes which have the potential to undo the hard-won gains made over the past years. In this regard, the JTF looked forward to the upcoming UN Security Council presidential statement and the PSC communiqué of 19 and 29 January 2015, respectively, and in accordance with the UN Human Rights Due Diligence Policy. The JTF underlined the need for a multi-dimensional response to the Boko Haram threat, in addition to the military and security operations against Boko Haram and other terrorist groups. The JTF also included other measures aimed at improving livelihoods, education and job creation, as well as protection of human rights. The JTF agreed to identify other practical ways of effectively supporting the efforts of the countries of the region, notably the operationalization of the MNJTF.