



Mr. Jean Ping Chairperson of the AUC with Mr Moussa Koussa– Chairperson of the Council

The official opening of the Sixteenth Ordinary Session of the Executive Council took place on Thursday 28 January 2010, at the headquarters of the African Union (AU) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, under the Chairmanship of Mr. Moussa Koussa, Secretary of International Cooperation to the People's General Committee in charge of External Liaison and International Cooperation of the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, who is also the Chairperson of the Executive Council.

Amongst the key speakers during the opening ceremony was Mr. Jean Ping, Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC), Mr. Abdoulie Janneh, UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of the ECA, Mr. Vuk Jeremic, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the



Journalists and observers following proceedings

## SIXTEENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OPENS

Republic of Serbia and Dr. Paavo Vayrynen, Minister for Foreign Trade and Development, Finland.

Chairperson Ping began by inviting the participants to observe a minute of silence in memory of the victims of the Ethiopian Airlines Boeing 737 that crashed recently into the Mediterranean shortly after take-off from Beirut Airport in Lebanon, for the victims of the earthquake in Haïti, and the victims of the recent attacks on the African Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) in Mogadishu.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Jean Ping, pointed out that the year 2009 had been an "Annus Horribilis" year, meaning that it was a hard year for the entire world. For the African Union Commission, it was also a special year, given that important meetings were held during that period aimed at reinforcing peace and security and development in Africa. He said, concrete actions were implemented in line with the Strategic Plan of the African Union Commission.

He further highlighted the different achievements with respect to the peace keeping efforts of the AU in conflict areas. These include: Niger, Sudan, Somalia, Madagascar and Guinea Bissau. Mr. Ping also recalled some meetings of high importance that took place in 2009, such as the Special Summit on Conflict management which held on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2009, in Tripoli, Libya. He expressed satisfaction with the common position by the African delegation during the Copenhagen Summit on Climate Change where he said, Africa was strongly represented and spoke with one voice.

Speaking later, Mr. Abdoulie Janneh of the ECA, said the year 2010 is very important given that many African States will be celebrating their fiftieth (50) anniversaries in the course of the year. He said, the theme of the

14<sup>th</sup> AU Summit was timely given the many challenges on ICTs in Africa. "Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) can improve performance of businesses and the efficiency of markets, while empowering citizens and communities and increasing their access to knowledge", adding that the use of geo-spatial technology for management and exploration of natural resources and disaster awareness and preparedness as well as in climate change adaptation will contribute to improving socio-economic conditions in Africa.

Addressing participants, the Chairperson of the Executive Council, Mr. Moussa Koussa, emphasized on the need for resolving conflicts on the continent through the implementation of good governance, democracy and political dialogue. He called on the AU Member States to create conducive conditions in their respective countries for peace, stability and security to prevail. Mr. Koussa, expressed satisfaction with the revitalization of Afro-Arab cooperation in preparation for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Africa- Arab Summit.

The representatives of Serbia and Finland both took their turns to address the Executive Council. They stressed on the importance of reinforcing cooperation ties with the African Union in the socio-cultural and economic domains to contribute to the development of Africa.



Some of the ministers and delegations at the opening ceremony

## **CHAIRPERSON OF THE AUC PRESENTS HIS BEST WISHES TO THE PRESS AND OFFICIALLY LAUNCHES THE YEAR OF PEACE AND SECURITY IN AFRICA**

The Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC) Mr. Jean Ping addressed local and international media based in Addis Ababa on 27 January 2010, on the occasion of the New Year 2010. His best wishes were presented to the media at the headquarters of the AUC in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The AUC Chairperson seized the occasion to officially launch the Year of peace and Security in Africa .



Mr. Jean Ping Chairperson of the AUC (speaking) with Mr Mwencha the Deputy Chairperson and Commissioners

“Last year, at this time, 138 journalists were deprived of their right to inform. This year according to “Reporters sans Frontière” (RSF), 187 journalists are imprisoned around the world,” said Mr. Ping.

Regarding the crisis in Madagascar, the AUC Chairperson deplored the fact that neither the adoption of the Transitional Charter nor the agreements of Maputo and the Additional Act of Addis Ababa were enough to enable the distribution of ministerial portfolios.

As to the deterioration of the humanitarian and security situation in Somalia, “it is clear that Somalia is still a major concern throughout Africa and the world,” declared Mr. Ping.

As the AMISOM mandate was renewed for a period of 12 months, the Chairperson expressed his disappointment at failing to attain the authorized 8,000 men, and hopes that the promised troops will be on the ground in 2010.

Mr. Ping underscored the considerable progress made in Sudan, as the process of im-

plementing the global peace agreement has celebrated its 5th anniversary. “I hope that the implementation of the Mbeki Report will be a lasting solution” added the AUC chairperson. Despite the remaining challenges, national elections will be held in April 2010, followed by the referendum for southern Sudan and the Abyei region in January 2011.

In Guinea, the prospect of the return to constitutional rule as the existing team will not attend the elections, is a relief, the Chairperson said. Africa’s hopes lie in the processes of reconciliation, reconstruction and post-conflict mediation, for peace to settle on a sustainable basis.

The entry into force of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance in 2010, will contribute greatly to the structural prevention of conflicts on the continent, the AUC Chairperson stated.

He launched the Year of peace and Security in Africa (APSA), which was declared by the Heads of State and Government of the African Union at the Special Session

on the review and resolution of conflicts in Africa, August 31, 2009 in Tripoli, Libya, and went on to say that the year 2010 should be the year of renewal in Africa.

He called upon the media to accompany the AUC throughout 2010 in the implementation of activities planned under the APSA.

The APSA will target four main objectives throughout the year: Giving a new impulse to efforts for peace and security on the continent; Give greater visibility to past and ongoing efforts of the AU to promote peace and security on the ground; Invigorate the commitments made by Heads of States and Governments in promoting peace and security; Establishing a bridge between official efforts to promote peace and security, initiated in the field by the grassroots communities.

Through these initiatives, Africa is on its way to finding African solutions to African problems.

### **The 19th Ordinary Session of the Permanent Representatives Committee of (PRC) ended on Wednesday 28 January 2010, at the Headquarters of the African Union (AU) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.**

During the two day PRC meeting, which started on Monday, 25 January 2010, the Ambassadors discussed various agenda items to be considered at the Executive Council Session. Among them are; administrative and financial matters, implementation of various reports, legal and institutional matters, political matters, and economic, social and cultural matters.

While closing the PRC meeting Mr. Ali Awidan, Ambassador of the Great Socialist People’s Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and Chairperson of the PRC extended his vote of thanks to the members of the PRC for their valuable deliberation during the session.



PRC Chairperson Mr. Ali Awidan



## INTERNATIONAL CONTACT GROUP ON GUINEA (ICG-G) MEETS ON MARGIN OF AU SUMMIT



The tenth meeting of the International Contact Group on Guinea (ICG-G) took place in Addis Ababa on 26 January 2010, in the margins of the Ordinary Sessions of the AU Executive Council and the Assembly of the Union. The Group assessed the political and security situation in the Republic of Guinea since its ninth meeting held in Ouagadougou on 13 December 2009, particularly following the signing of the Joint Declaration of Ouagadougou of 15 January 2010 and the subsequent appointment of a new Prime Minister on 21 January 2010.

The Group commended President Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso, the ECOWAS Mediator in the crisis in Guinea. It welcomed the signing of the Joint Declaration of Ouagadougou, and urged all the Guinean stakeholders in the transitional process to work towards its timely implementation.

The Group, however, underscored the continuing fragility of the situation in Guinea. Consequently, it invited all the Guinean stakeholders to unite and take ownership of this Declaration and to consolidate it by all appropriate means, including through a comprehensive and inclusive political agreement, without slowing down the pace of the transition. The ICG urged all the stakeholders in the Guinea crisis to fully cooperate with the Interim Head of State, General Sékouba Konate, and the Prime Minister, Jean-Marie Doré, with a view to rapidly forming a National Unity Government capable of leading the country towards the restoration of constitutional order through the holding of free and transparent elections within the next six (6) months.

Regarding the assistance towards the defence and security sector reform, including the comprehensive and sustainable restructuring of the Guinean Armed Forces, the Group invited the ECOWAS, AU, the UN and the Mediator to deploy as soon as possible, and in consultation with the Guinean authorities, a joint civil-military mission with a view to discussing the modalities for the implementation of these reforms and also contributing to the creation of the requisite security conditions for the electoral process.

The Group urged ECOWAS, the AU, the UN, EU and the OIF, as well as all the other technical and financial partners, to continue with their efforts towards assisting Guinea to accomplish the transition process by finalizing the voter registration exercise and the holding of credible and transparent elections.

During this sensitive period, the Group urged all Guineans to remain united, to maintain social cohesion and to refrain from all pronouncements and behaviour that may aggravate tensions. It urged appealed to the media to be constructive partners in the peace process.

Finally, the Group expressed its gratitude to the Chairperson of the AU Commission for the warm welcome and hospitality accorded it, and for the measures taken to ensure a successful meeting.

## COMMISSION REGISTERS IMPRESSIVE PERFORMANCE IN 2009



Mr. Erastus Mwencha, Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission held a press conference on January 27<sup>th</sup> 2010, at the Headquarters of the AUC in the framework of the 14<sup>th</sup> Summit of the African Union. The Deputy Chairperson addressed the press on issues such as evaluation of the implementation of the AUC budget, follow-up on the implementation of the AUC Strategic Plan 2009-2012; development of the continent, integration of NEPAD into the African Union, and the creation of a new institution in the Commission to fight corruption in Africa.

Mr. Mwencha said a budget of 200 million dollars for the Commission is being considered by the Executive Council, showing a growth of 20 percent over last year. The budget is divided into an operational component and a development component. These resources will be used in line with the 6 programme areas of the AU i.e. peace and security, development, cooperation, integration, shared values and institution and capacity building. After the council makes its comments and adjustments, the budget will be sent to the Assembly.

Mr. Mwencha also said the performance of the Commission in 2009 was impressive as it was able to meet many of its targets.



Dr Ibrahim Mayaki, Chief Executive Officer of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) held a press conference on January 27, to inform the press about the objectives and action plans of NEPAD.

He first reviewed the process of integration of NEPAD into the AU processes. This process, which has taken many years, included doing analysis and studies, he said. A strong acceleration in the process of integration was witnessed last year. Dr Mayaki stressed that this process requires harmonization of the NEPAD secretariat's administrative and managerial systems to the standards and rules of the AU. Technical harmonization will lead to the consistency of the NEPAD Secretariat's activities with those of the AU. He then recalled that NEPAD will facilitate the creation and strengthening of regional integration. NEPAD will also ensure the effective implementation and enforcement of plans and projects at the regional level. According to the CEO, the ongoing summit will be an opportunity to finalize the integration of NEPAD in decisions which will create the NEPAD Planning and Co-ordination Agency.

Dr Mayaki emphasized that, in view of the influence of the global economic crisis, Africa must rethink its policy of governance. Africa must also redefine its policy of exporting raw materials, strengthen its infrastructure and protect its interests in a coordinated and complementary way.

## JEAN PING CALLS FOR STRONG AFRICAN SOLIDARITY WITH THE PEOPLE OF HAITI

Mr. Jean Ping, Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC), has called for strong African solidarity with the people of Haiti.

He was speaking during the official opening ceremony of the 19th Ordinary Session of the Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC) on Monday, 25 January 2010. He appealed to all the AU Member States to contribute for the victims of the disastrous earthquake that occurred on 12 January 2010 killing over 150,000 people. Chairperson Ping recalled to the Member States that this earthquake is an extraordinary disaster that terribly affected the people of Haiti. He informed the PRC that a note verbal to that effect was addressed to all the Heads of State of the AU and that a similar letter was jointly published by the League of Arab States and the Chairperson of the AUC, calling on African communities to rally behind the victims of the Haiti earthquake.

Mr. Ping announced that, a special account to collect funds from the African countries and donors has been opened at the African Development Bank (AfDB) in order to ensure transparency in the channeling of the funds to the victims. He added that a more detailed report of what has been done so far will be presented to the Heads of State during their 14<sup>th</sup> AU Assembly scheduled to take place from 31<sup>st</sup> January to 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2010.

### **A discussion panel on ICT took place on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2010, at the Headquarters of the African Union Commission (AUC) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The ICT Panel Discussion took place in the context of the ongoing 14<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Summit of the AU, whose theme is “ICT in Africa: Challenges and Prospects for Development”.**

Addressing the participants, Mr. Erastus Mwencha, Deputy Chairperson of the AUC, indicated that the conference was a forum to exchange views and hoped that the outcomes of the meeting would be useful in guiding the AUC to play its leadership role in coordinating the development of ICT in Africa. He also maintained that, ICT was a sector to be enhanced at national and regional levels despite the challenges faced by the sector in Africa. Meanwhile, Mr. Mwencha pointed out the importance of ICTs to promote education, skills and development.

Speaking earlier, Dr Elham Mamoud, began by thanking the major partners of the meeting; Microsoft Africa and the World Bank (WB) amongst others.

Dr Ibrahim said the objectives of ICT development are to develop broadband infrastructure, and the ICT panel discussion would offer a new orientation and support for the development of the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in Africa.

On his part, the representative of the World Bank, Mr Richard Scobey, presented the feasibility study carried out jointly with NEPAD and the African Development Bank (AfDB) on ICTs. He said the study will serve as a framework to the AUC for the elaboration of an action plan on ICT.

Participants at the panel discussion included: Regional Economic Communities; continental and international specialized institutions; international financial institutions; private sector, and regional regulators associations.

**Chief Editor:** Habiba Mejri-Cheikh

[habibam@africa-union.org](mailto:habibam@africa-union.org)

**Editor:** Wynne Musabayana

[musabayanaw@africa-union.org](mailto:musabayanaw@africa-union.org)

**Lay out and design:** Lalla Sy

[lallasy123@hotmail.com](mailto:lallasy123@hotmail.com)

Contributing writers: Esther Azaa, Yaye Nabo Sene, Lalla Sy, Maureen Donhossou, Isabelle Andela, Molalet Tsedeke

Photography: Engda Wassie

AUC News

African Union Headquarters

Roosevelt street Old Airport Area

P O Box 3243

Addis Ababa

Ethiopia

**AU ECHO is published by the Communication and Information Division of the African Union Commission. Its views do not necessarily reflect the views of the African Union**

### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SUMMIT

Election of a new Chairperson for the African Union  
 Launch of the New African Union Flag  
 Launch of the Continental Scientific Award for two (2) successful African Scientists.  
 Adoption of the Staff Regulations and Rules;  
 Adoption of the Budget for the 2010 financial year  
 Appointment of new members of the Peace and Security Council (PSC)  
 Distribution of the AU diaries, featuring football teams of AU member states  
 Exhibition on ICT  
 Awarding of [rozes to two outstanding African scientists

Consideration and adoption of the following reports :  
 The Report of the Chairperson of NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee  
 The Report of the Ministerial Meeting on the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC)  
 The Report of the Chairperson of the Committee of Ten on the UN Reforms  
 The Report of the Commission on the Implementation of Previous Decisions of the Executive Council and the Assembly

Consideration of the following reports :  
 The Report on the Peace and Security Council on its activities and the State of Peace and Security in Africa along side that of African Year of Peace and Security  
 The Report of the Commission on Unconstitutional Changes of Government