

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION DIRECTORATE

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Venue: Nairobi, Kenya

AU and RECs/RMs convened the 2nd Policy Session of the AU I-RECKE



The African Union (AU) and the Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs) held the second policy session on their joint initiative, the African Union Inter-Regional Knowledge Exchange (I-RECKE) on Early Warning and Conflict Prevention focusing on the theme: *'Cross-Regional Strategies in Preventing Terrorism and Violent Extremism'* on the sidelines of the AU Fifth Midyear Coordination Meeting between AU and RECs/RMs, 15 July 2023, in Nairobi, Kenya.

The policy session was graced by the opening remarks of Ambassador Bankole Adeoye - AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security; Ambassador Gilberto Da Piedade Verissimo - the Representative of the RECs/RMs and the President of the ECCAS Commission and Ambassador Parfait Onanga Anyanga - Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the African Union and Head of UNOAU.

All the AU recognized RECs/RMs were represented in the policy session which provided an opportunity to discuss lessons learned and share experiences aimed at enhancing cross- regional cooperation between the AU Commission, the RECs and RMs in the prevention and combating of terrorism and violent extremism. The threat posed by terrorism and violent extremism has been and continues to be one of the most critical challenges facing our continent.

“To achieve a conflict-free Africa as envisaged in Agenda 2063 and to Silence the Guns by 2030, we need to concentrate on collective cross-regional strategies which

can be applied at national, regional, and continental levels, while also working in tandem with our partners, to build resilience in peace and security”, Ambassador Bankole Adeoye stressed in his opening remarks.

On the same note, the AU High Representative for Silencing the Guns, Dr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas, in his remarks, reiterated the call for continuous and regular engagements, not just between the AU and the RECs and RMs, but amongst all stakeholders, Member States included, to effectively counter emerging threats to the continent's peace and stability, especially terrorism and violent extremism, which remain the most pressing security threats in Africa today.

The policy session identified lessons in form of what works and what does not in terms of cross-regional efforts towards preventing and combating terrorism and violent extremism and chartered a way forward towards coordinated action to support efforts of Member States in the prevention and combating of terrorism and violent extremism and the implementation of the Declaration and Decisions of the 16th Extraordinary Session of the Assembly on Terrorism and Unconstitutional Changes of Government in Africa, held on 28 May 2022, in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea.

The I-RECKE, which came to life on 17th July 2022 in Lusaka, Zambia, provides an opportunity for more structured interaction between AU Commission and RECs/RMs, based on knowledge exchange in order to enhance coherent efforts to collectively address the existing and emerging peace and security challenges on the Continent.

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