

Peace and Security & Migration discussed as AUC Chairperson bids farewell to outgoing Ambassador of Denmark to Ethiopia and to the AU

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The Chairperson of the African Union Commission H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat today bid farewell to the outgoing Ambassador of the Kingdom of Denmark to Ethiopia, Djibouti, South Sudan, Sudan and Permanent Representative to the African Union, IGAD and UNECA. H.E. Karin Poulsen.

In his farewell remarks, the Chairperson welcomed the cordial relations that have existed between Denmark and the African Union and its member states, noting that the relationship with Denmark was a hallmark of the partnerships that the African Union expects in its partnerships with other European Union (EU) states.

On peace and security issues, the Chairperson welcomed the support accorded by Denmark and the EU to the AU Peace keeping forces in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel Region noting that the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) has benefitted from the technical and financial support that has been provided for its peace keeping activities as well as supporting the capacity building initiatives for the Somali security forces.



1AUC Chairperson H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat (R), outgoing Ambassador of the Kingdom of Denmark to Ethiopia & Permanent Representative to the, H.E. Karin Poulsen(L)

The Chairperson noted that in order to address and counter the activities of the Al-Shabab terror group as well as other militant groups on the continent, there was an urgent need to identify and dismantle the financial networks that support their operations as the ability to finance their activities is what has enabled them to be resilient in the face of combined regional and international counter terrorism actions. The Chairperson emphasised that multilateral partners in their approaches to supporting peace on the

continent must also recognise the need to consult with the African Union to ensure decisions and interventions made lead to long term solutions and not further disruptions. He remarked non-state actors take advantage of gaps created when

conflicts arise and action is taken that does consider wider regional implications as is the case in the Sahel and Mali where the proliferation of small arms has been witnessed and territories have been taken up by extremists who benefit from national actors not having control over the entirety of their national territory.

The Chairperson commended the support provided by Denmark and the EU in supporting processes that mitigate conflict including promoting good governance, national dialogue and the various transitional processes as seen in their support to the African Union's Election Observer Mission and support for Sudan's transition. In respect to the Sudan, the Chairperson further noted that after years of sanctions, Sudan required financial support to ensure that its transition meets the level of success required to enable it to achieve its developmental goals.

On the issue of migration, the Chairperson reiterated that whereas the European Union has witnessed an influx of migrants, the fact remains that the larger part of migration, approximately 80-90% is within the continent. He noted that there was a need to reframe the ongoing narrative about illegal migration stating that ***"We cannot explain a phenomenon by its consequence, rather we need to explain it by its cause."*** He further added that issues such as food security and famine largely caused by climate factors; as well as conflicts and unemployment are some of the causal factors leading to increased migration and there is a need to deal with the issues upstream at national and regional levels to create the environments that will be conducive for people to achieve social and economic stability.

On her part Ambassador Poulsen shared the Chairperson's perspective that equal partnerships was necessary with the African Union and its Member States and stated that this sentiment would be reinforced in the AU-EU foreign ministers meeting scheduled for later this year. She noted that the joint consultations would ensure that Africa's development Agenda was the basis of partnerships implemented on the continent stating 'We can only be a good partner if we adhere to your priorities.'

Ambassador Poulsen reiterated the commitment of Denmark to continue supporting bilateral governance programmes aimed at promoting democratic transitions as well as supporting the work of the African Union's Political Affairs Peace and Security department in implementing the AU's priority programmes. She also welcomed the continental initiative to develop Africa's regional trade and economic integration through the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and reiterated the support of Denmark towards its implementation.

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