



AFRICAN PARLIAMENTARY UNION

APU

36th CONFERENCE
7 and 8 November 2013, Libreville, Gabon

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RESOLUTION

on

“The role of African Parliaments in mobilizing efforts by governments and people to end all forms of armed conflicts on the African continent”

The African Parliamentary Union, meeting at its 36th Conference in Libreville (Gabon) on 7 and 8 November 2013,

Considering that governments work together with international organizations such as the United Nations and the African Union, whose goals are: to (i) serve as international peacekeeping and security bodies that foster peaceful coexistence and equality among States; (ii) encourage justice and respect for international law; and (iii) promote economic and social progress,

Recalling:

- The African Charter of Human and Peoples’ Rights (Nairobi, 27 June 1981);
- The African Union Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism (1 July 1999) and its protocol (1 July 2004);
- The African Union Non-aggression and Common Defence Pact (Abuja, 1 January 2005);
- The African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (30 January 2007);

Underlining the importance of parliaments as democratic institutions and their role in promoting peace and stability,

Affirming that parliaments are duty bound to support efforts made by the United Nations, the African Union and subregional organizations to strengthen friendship and cooperation, ensure the respect of human rights and civil and political rights and promote democracy and peace,

Convinced that the practice of democracy and respect for human rights and Humanitarian International Law are means for preventing conflicts and restoring trust and peace in the aftermath of crisis,

Reaffirming the necessity to promote democracy through free and fair elections ensuring credible electoral results accepted by political parties committed in the electoral process,

Underlining that respect for the rule of law, fight against corruption and impunity and the introduction of appropriate development policies are indispensable for security, peace and stability,

Stressing that education plays a crucial role in promoting a democratic culture of peace and non-violence,

Aware that democracy is strengthened when all categories of society, including women and youth, minorities and vulnerable groups are fully involved in democratic processes,

Aware that poverty and unemployment, coupled with ethnic or political conflicts, is likely to lead to violent opposition to governments,

Reaffirming that mutual respect and coexistence among various religious and ethnic groups, and dialogue and economic and social development policy, based on good governance are means for preventing internal conflicts and their extension to other countries,

Deploring that conflicts have had a huge impact on poverty reduction, jeopardizing prospects for the continent’s structural stability and sustainable development,

Noting that both natural resource exploitation and marketing and crossborder trading of small arms and financial resources fan regional conflicts ,

Convinced that instituting and maintaining peace and security require the full participation of women in the decision-making process, conflict prevention and settlement, as well as all other peace initiatives,

Aware that the existence of conflicts imply that certain situations have led to them, and therefore, their prevention should be the focus,

Considering that conflict prevention should be based on case by case political, economic and cultural analysis of every situation at risk, so as to avoid employing solutions used for other experiences that may ultimately fail,

Convinced of the need for governments and the international community to ensure flexible and continued use of all available means, be they political, diplomatic, economic or military,

Underlining the importance of setting up an early warning mechanism to prevent conflicts on the continent,

Convinced that conflicts are always specific to a particular context; and there is therefore no single cause or solution for all the conflict and violence situations besetting the African continent,

Observing that inter-State conflicts in crossborder areas are likely to destabilize entire regions, with the use of child soldiers recruited under duress and taken to fight beyond the borders,

Convinced that parliaments can play a major role in conflict prevention and resolution, as well as in consolidating peace and stability,

Resolved that our parliaments fully play their role in the process of adhesion to instruments of Humanitarian International Law and adapt the national laws to ensure their effective implementation,

Underlining the role of non-governmental organizations and other civil society stakeholders, which contribute to institutional reconstruction, facilitating dialogue among communities, implementing confidence-building measures and building peace through mediation and reconciliation,

1. *Firmly condemns* all forms of conflicts in Africa;
2. *Requests* parliaments, in partnership with governments, to ensure:
 - Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, as major elements for strengthening democratic processes;
 - Promotion of the culture of peace, democracy, justice, mutual tolerance and coexistence among various groups of the society;
 - Promotion of good political, economic and social governance;
 - The fair distribution of the country’s wealth;
 - The protection of civilians, especially women and children in situations of social crises and/or armed conflicts;

3. *Calls on* governments to stress on equity in sharing power and wealth, through political reforms aimed at establishing more freedoms and ensuring the sovereignty of the constitution and law, the separation of powers and the participation of civil society organizations;

4. *Encourages* parliaments to work with governments and political parties to promote social justice to ensure lasting peace;

5. *Calls on* parliaments and governments to ensure equal participation by all categories of society, including women and young people, minorities and vulnerable groups in democratic processes and governance;

6. *Urges* parliaments and governments to strengthen measures to combat poverty and corruption, which are likely to create conditions favouring the emergence of violence and internal conflicts; and also combat all ethnic, nationalistic or religious strife;

7. *Appeals* to parliaments and governments to pool their efforts to combat small arms proliferation, which occupies a major place in national conflict prevention and peacebuilding strategies;

8. *Calls on* governments to involve parliaments in the process of direct negotiations among conflicting parties, as a means of seeking peaceful solutions to these conflicts;

9. *Urges* governments to introduce programmes to teach people on tolerance, human rights and the culture of peace in formal and informal education;

10. *Commits* parliaments and governments to ensuring that education programmes are designed to promote respect and understanding among communities to promote social cohesion, and eschew indoctrination and hatred;

11. *Encourages* efforts by African States to renounce violence by promoting understanding and respect among cultures and faiths, and by eliminating discrimination in all its forms;

12. *Encourages* States to promote dialogue, mediation and negotiation in internal conflict resolution, as a means of eliminating the causes of dissension, which lead to attempts at deposing democratically elected governments;

13. *Calls upon* Parliaments to fully use their legislative and monitoring power in view of the prevention and the resolution of conflicts as well as the respect of minorities' human rights;

14. *Urges* African parliaments to join efforts with their respective governments to prevent armed conflicts by identifying and analyzing the causes on a case-by-case basis to find specific solutions to each case;

15. *Calls on* parliaments to use parliamentary diplomacy as a means of achieving regional security and stability on the basis of universal principles, as provided by the United Nations Charter and the African Union Charter;

16. *Encourages* governments and the African Union to reinforce the integrated conflict prevention strategy as well as the early warning system at the regional and national levels;

17. *Supports* actions and efforts toward conflict prevention and settlement undertaken at the institutional level by the African Union and its Peace and Security Council, the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the Conference on Security, Stability and Development and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA) and NEPAD through the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM);

18. *Encourages* parliaments to cooperate among themselves in the field of management of conflict effects, and to facilitate the setting up of inter-parliamentary forums on peace, just like the AMANI Forum for the Great Lakes region, which will be regional instruments for dialogue and sharing of analyses, encouragement and solidarity among parliamentarians of the region, with the goal of increasing the capacity and role of parliaments in restoring peace in the region;

19. *Requests* governments and parliaments to help in the reconstruction process and creating the necessary infrastructures and production capacities;

20. *Commits* parliaments to taking part in the inter-ethnic reconciliation process, by according due importance to traditional societies and authorities, with a view to normalizing situations;

21. *Encourages* Parliaments and governments to promote the role of actors of civil society in institutional reconstruction, facilitation of intercommunity dialogue, confidence-building measures and building peace through mediation and reconciliation;

22. *Requests* Parliaments and governments to watch over the participation of all citizens in the administrative and political management of the country;

23. *Urges* all States and governments to combat terrorist activities by ensuring that their countries are not used for terrorist operations against other States, individuals or groups of individuals;

24. *Calls on* countries and the whole international community to promote and to monitor the respect of the principle of non interference in internal affairs of a country;

25. *Calls on* African countries to step up their efforts to prevent and halt the proliferation of small arms and weapons of mass destruction, and strengthen policies on control and recall of these weapons to prevent their transfer to terrorist groups;

26. *Urges* parliaments and governments to implement programmes of action to combat the proliferation and illegal trafficking of small arms and to promote the rapid ratification and the implementation of universal and regional treaties related to these issues;

27. *Calls on* the African Union to set up, under its auspices, an organ entrusted with the treatment of effects caused by natural disasters, inter-ethnic and internal conflicts, provoking forced exodus, especially of children, women and aged people, that which may create a favorable conflict situation;

28. *Supports* efforts by governments and the entire international community to reform the United Nations, particularly expanding the Security Council to make it more representative and capable of solving peace and security issues for African countries;

29. *Requests* parliaments and governments to accelerate the signature and ratification process of international instruments aimed at promoting peace, security and development in African countries.