



# AFRICAN PARLIAMENTARY UNION APU

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R.129/33/10

## RESOLUTION

on

### *“Preserving the peace and social stability by enhancing good governance”*

The African Parliamentary Union, meeting at its 33<sup>rd</sup> Conference in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, from 2 to 3 December 2010,

*Considering* that peace and social stability are prerequisites for development and that true and lasting peace is essential to ensure a people-centred sustained economic, social and cultural development,

*Aware* that peace is not only an absence of conflict, but also the existence of living conditions that enable people to develop and live in harmony and understanding,

*Acknowledging* that economic marginalization, poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, the feeling of unfair redistribution of the national wealth, are all sources of conflicts and a serious threat to peace and social stability,

*Also aware* that the exclusion of certain communities or social groups from the decision-making process or their participation in political and economic activities, inter-ethnic, religious, identity and cultural struggles can all undermine peace and social stability and lead to social unrest, political turmoil, conflicts and wars and thereby to the collapse of democracy,

*Noting* that the growing numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons, as well as human rights abuses are a threat to peace and social stability,

*Convinced* that terrorism, cross-border crime, the proliferation, circulation and trafficking of small arms and light weapons and drug trafficking are serious threats to peace and social stability and hinder the harmonious economic and social development of the continent,

*Convinced* that preserving peace and social stability requires the involvement of all components of society who must be empowered and sensitized about the need for social cohesion on the bases of national history and cultural values,

*Considering*, in line with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), that “governance is the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country’s affairs at all levels” and that good governance is among other things, citizen participation in decision-making, accountability, rule of law, transparency, equity, institutions, procedures and information for all,

**Also taking into account** the link of interdependence between peace, social stability and good governance,

**Recalling** the United Nations Education and Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Constitutive Act stating that “Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed”,

**Affirming** that good governance is the foundation of sustained development, a factor of peace, security and social stability, and that it is the most reliable way to combat poverty; and *aware* that without a policy of good governance, economic and social development efforts will not yield the expected results,

**Concerned** that mismanagement and the resulting waste of national resources, tax evasion, corruption and absence of transparency which have a negative impact on growth and are the major issues that African countries have to resolve to ensure the efficiency of their management of the public sector,

**Emphasizing** the need to set up efficient anti-corruption bodies with adequate human and financial resources and without any form of interference,

**Endorsing** the necessity of political and economic good governance stated by the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD),

**Recalling** its resolutions *on*:

- “The role of African parliaments in promoting peace on the African continent” (25<sup>th</sup> Conference, Khartoum, October 2002) ;
- “Promoting good governance : the role of African parliaments” (27<sup>th</sup> Conference, Algiers, November 2004) ;
- “Strengthening democracy with a view to preserving peace in Africa” (28<sup>th</sup> Conference, Brazzaville, November 2005),
- The final declaration of the Parliamentary Conference on “*Africa and migration: challenges, issues and solutions*”, held in Rabat, Morocco, 22 to 24 May 2008.

1. **Reaffirms** that democracy, the respect for basic freedoms and human rights, good governance, tolerance and the culture of peace are essential elements to preserving peace and social stability and that good governance ensures sustained economic and human development and prevents conflicts.
2. **Stresses** that prevention, peaceful management and conflict settlement create an environment that is conducive to the preservation of peace and stability on the continent.
3. **Urges** the African Union, to increase its efforts to promote good governance and tighten its sanctions for the sake of peace, and governments to adopt open dialogue as a solution to the conflicts they are faced with, so as to strengthen political, economic and social stability in Africa.

4. **Invites** parliaments to back government efforts in their fight against terrorism, cross-border crime, the proliferation, circulation and trafficking of small arms and light weapons, as well as drug trafficking.
5. **Urges** African governments to set up truly independent and neutral bodies to organize free and transparent elections to accord legitimacy to elected officials, which would be accepted by all citizens; and build strong and democratic institutions that would ensure peace and social stability.
6. **Urges** African governments to accelerate ratification of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance.
7. **Urges** parliaments, in their capacity as national representatives, to fully play their role in defining economic and social policies that takes the gender dimension into account and strengthens mutual trust, and in controlling government action.
8. **Calls on** African parliaments and governments to pursue and increase their efforts in ensuring equal respect, protection and exercise of basic civic and political rights for citizens, including freedom of opinion and especially those relating to citizenship as recognized in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and in the African Charter on Human and People's Rights.
9. **Advocates** the implementation of policies leading to the promotion and enjoyment of children's rights, as well as to the full physical, intellectual and moral development in an environment of peace, security and stability.
10. **Commits** parliaments to adopt adequate national legislations which ensure equal opportunity, in terms of access to health, education, employment and other civil rights, for every citizen, including war victims, vulnerable people, refugees and in particular, women and the girl child.
11. **Recalls** that people's participation in decisions concerning them is essential for any project to succeed and **invites** parliaments and governments to adopt and implement mechanisms that facilitate, the participation of the minority, especially women, on equal footing with men, in political, economic and social decision-making, while combating the discrimination, in terms of poverty, illiteracy and violence, which prevent them from fully participating in the preservation of peace.
12. **Calls on** States to strive for the promotion of good governance in order to restore the basis for sustained development through the adoption and implementation of a national plan on good governance and anti-corruption and **urges** States to ratify the United Nations Convention Against Corruption as well as other regional and international anti-corruption instruments.
13. **Encourages** parliaments and governments to adopt legal and regulatory measures to build appropriate and efficient States by increasing transparency and accountability in the management of public resources.
14. **Also encourages** the implementation of national financial control and audit systems and the adoption of measures aimed at enforcing transparency in the

contract award process and improving the business environment and *stresses* the urgent need for the implementation of independent, impartial, competent and efficient legal systems.

15. *Invites* States to establish transparent support policies for the private sector which is the main source of productive jobs and economic growth in most countries, given that the preservation of peace, stability and good governance partly depends on the opportunities the economy offers and on the creation of income-generating jobs capable of improving the living conditions of citizens.
16. *Emphasizes* the need for government to implement a policy of equitable distribution of the wealth and incomes of the country in order to fight poverty, illiteracy, social inequality, as well as a policy of job creation, particularly for the youth.
17. *Recommends* that African States should work toward capacity building and promotion of participation of civil society organizations, as their involvement in environment conservation, assistance to disadvantaged people and human resource development can help improve the living conditions of citizens.
18. *Encourages* governments and parliaments to institute a social dialogue system with social partners, with a view to preserving peace and social stability.
19. *Urges* States to strive to strengthen and deepen decentralization and deconcentration policies and ensure equitable transfer of skills and resources needed for local authorities.
20. *Commits* parliaments, as part of good governance, to back initiatives aimed at promoting a free, professional and responsible private media, capable of providing the public with reliable information, building the capacities of professional journalists and, also, popularizing and improving access to information and communication technologies.
21. *Urges* African government to include in their education systems, a programme focused on tolerance, human rights and the culture of peace.