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**SUMMARY REPORT OF THE
CONSULTATIVE MEETING WITH
CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS ON THE AFRICAN
UNION'S DECISION AND POLICY ON POST CONFLICT
RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT (PCRD)**

**12-13 MARCH 2007
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Conflict Management Division hosted a Consultative Meeting with Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) on the African Union's decision and policy on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) on 12-13 March 2007 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The Organisation for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa (OSSREA) played a supportive role.

2. **The aim** of the meeting was to **discuss the role of civil society organisations in the operationalisation of the Banjul decision adopting the African Union's PCRD policy. The objectives** were three-fold: to present AU Commission's draft implementation plan of the PCRD Policy and Decision; to solicit CSOs' input to the implementation of the PCRD Policy and Decision; and to obtain CSOs' recommendations for themes in the discussion of the implementation of PCRD Policy and Decision at a larger gathering of the AU Commission, Member States, the private sector, CSOs and other stakeholders at the 2nd Consultative Workshop scheduled for July 2007.

II. SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

3. The two-day meeting focused on following thematic issues: The African Union's Post-conflict Reconstruction and Development Policy; Integrated Mission Planning; The Role of Civil Society in a Post-Conflict Environment; and The Way Forward: Recommendations for the 2nd Consultative Meeting with wider civil society.

The African Union's Post-conflict Reconstruction and Development Policy

4. In the discussions on the Commission's brief on the PCRD Policy and Decision and its draft implementation plan, the following major issues were highlighted:

- a. Need to frame and clarify PCRD in terms of the emerging continental vision such as concretising the strategic concepts in the document such as security sector reform (SSR) or human security;
- b. Ensuring that there are appropriate benchmarks and standards for assessing progress in these areas;
- c. Aligning the vision of international partners with the African vision of PCRD as a long term, transformative process;
- d. The need to distinguish between political, technical and operational implementation functions;
- e. The need to create synergies between new structures and between new and existing structures and mechanisms, including the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), the African Standby Force (ASF) and the various departments of the AU Commission;
- f. The need to utilize existing mechanisms to align ongoing activities on the ground with the policy;

- g. Emphasis on the AU's strategic leadership of PCRD processes and its support for countries emerging from conflict in the international arena;
- h. The need to determine the most appropriate level of engagement (national, regional or continental) for PCRD activities and the need to clearly identify the roles and responsibilities of the AU, sub-regional initiatives, national and international actors;
- i. The need for political will amongst AU Member States to implement the PCRD policy;
- j. The need to view PCRD within a continuum of mechanisms and activities for conflict prevention, management and resolution, such as the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) and the African Standby Force (ASF);
- k. Determining who defines the priorities for civil society;
- l. The need for balance between national, regional, AU and international mechanisms;
- m. Sourcing for resources for PCRD.

Integrated Mission Planning

5. The dialogue that ensured the presentation on integrated mission planning highlighted the following issues:

- a. The role of the military intervention should not be in conflict with or frustrate the long term objectives of PCRD;
- b. Planning should involve all key actors from the early stages;
- c. There must continuous evaluation to ensure flexibility and adaptability to conditions on the ground;
- d. There is need to identify the required expertise and enable the AU and its partners to commence recruitment, screening, pre-training and placement of expertise on standby;
- e. The need to align the development of the civilian component of the ASF with the required African expertise for PCRD processes and the AU Volunteers (AUV) programme;
- f. The importance of utilizing and building upon existing rosters and databases, rather than beginning a new database of African PCRD experts from scratch;

- g. The value in mobilising African (financial and human) resources for PCRD activities, through engagement with the African private sector, harnessing the continent's natural resource wealth and drawing upon the African diaspora;
- h. Acknowledgment of the role of external actors in triggering and sustaining conflicts in Africa, which needs to be addressed in PCRD processes if they are to succeed in bringing about sustainable peace.

The Role of Civil Society in a Post-Conflict Environment

6. In the discussion of the role of CSO in a post-conflict environment, the participants identified the following major issues:

- a. Under the **principle of national and local ownership**, the role of CSOs is to enhance common understanding of a shared vision and to re-engage the population in their own governance, through activities such as civic education;
- b. In line with the PCRD principle of **inclusiveness, equity and non-discrimination**, NGOs have a critical role in terms of protecting and promoting the rights and needs of vulnerable groups such as women or youth;
- c. In conformity with the PCRD principle of **coordination and coherence**, CSOs would require clarity in terms of division of roles amongst NGOs and other actors, improved targeting of NGO activities as well as a shift away from the practice of working in silos; and finally;
- d. Under the principle of **capacity building for sustainability**, CSOs would reduce dependency, lessen the negative impact of future shocks and improve the long-term sustainability of recovery and development.

7. Other areas for civil society were identified as follows:

- a. *Resource mobilisation*, with a special focus on alternative sources of resources such as South-South cooperation and responsible engagement of the private sector in PCRD processes;
- b. *Lobbying for debt cancellation*;
- c. *Advocacy for effective financial management structures*;
- d. *Providing the intellectual base* crucial for the success of the PCRD policy through the participation by research institutes, universities and other sectors of civil society;

- e. *Building entrepreneurial skills* amongst communities;
- f. *Engaging with all* relevant stakeholders;
- g. *Integrating different types of programmes*, to maximise impact;
- h. *Creation of a CSO standby network* for deployment to countries emerging from conflict;
- i. *Building CSOs capacity* (administrative, financial management, human resources and strategic planning skills);
- j. *Creation of CSO coordinating mechanisms at all levels*;
- k. *Popularisation of the PCRD policy* amongst other CSOs;
- l. *CSO input into ongoing AU activities*;
- m. *Commencing research on PCRD* as a basis for advice to policy makers and to inform civil society interventions in post-conflict situations;
- n. *Generation and dissemination of best practices* in PCRD activities;
- o. *Examination of mechanisms* for resource mobilization, assessments, monitoring and evaluation;
- p. OSSREA and other organizations that promote research could develop appropriate research methodology workshops and provide funding for research on PCRD in support of the activities outlined above, and could host seminars and publish various materials to disseminate the research.

Recommendations for the 2nd Consultative Meeting

8. The following recommendations were made in respect to the 2nd Consultative Meeting:

- a. Background papers should be commissioned, developed and disseminated prior to the meeting;
- b. The papers should:
 - (i) Locate the PCRD policy and agenda within the African vision of renaissance and the specific African peace and security context;
 - (ii) Examine the role, mandate, successes and challenges of CSOs in reconstruction efforts on the continent thus far;
 - (iii) Consider the question of coordination and coherence, particularly with regard to CSOs;
 - (iv) Draw lessons from experiences at national, regional, and continental levels;

- (v) Consider the issue of resource mobilisation, sources of resources and the challenges faced by countries emerging from conflict;

9. It was also recommended that the 2nd Consultative Meeting be geographically representative and be organised in thematic breakaway groups according to the elements of the policy and also reflect upon the relationship between CSOs and the AU PCRDR unit to determine the best means of continued engagement and cooperation.

10. It was further recommended that the meeting should attempt to address some of the obstacles to civil society participation in PCRDR processes, including determining the appropriate level of decentralisation and/or engagement; capacity building and retention for CSOs; mobilisation of resources; competition amongst CSOs.

III. RECOMMENDATION

10. The dialogue with civil society on 12 and 13 March served the desired goals. It is evident that the further engagement with the wider civil society and other stakeholders can only enhance the cause of PCRDR. In this respect it is recommended that the **background paper** for the 11th to 13th July 2007, along the lines of the "OAU-Civil Society Conference *Building Partnership for Promoting Peace & Development in Africa* 11 – 15 June 2001" be prepared for early dissemination.