Department of Political Affairs, African Union Commission

International Peace Institute

United Nations Development Programme

EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE IN CHALLENGING ENVIRONMENTS

AUGUST 5-6, 2014

La Palm Beach Hotel, Accra, GHANA

CONCEPT NOTE

Ongoing initiatives to address the crises in the Central African Republic and South Sudan, peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts in Mali, as well as initiatives to prevent organized violence and other forms of intra-state conflicts across Africa have often proved limited or unsuccessful. This highlights the urgent need to tackle from within and without the multilayered governance challenges that increasingly threaten peace, stability and development in Africa. To shed light on these challenges, the Department of Political Affairs of the African Union Commission, the United Nations Development Programme, Regional Service Centre for Africa and the International Peace Institute are jointly organizing a regional roundtable meeting on **Effective and Inclusive Governance in Africa: Bridging the Gap between Norms and Performance**. The main objectives of this meeting are to: (a) facilitate a shared understanding of the enduring and emerging factors that constrain and militate for the effective implementation of key good governance principles; (b) share experiences and collect best practices and lessons learned; and (c) identify concrete and innovative implementation strategies that can help advance good governance and foster peaceful, resilient and prosperous societies. These discussions will contribute to advancing ongoing efforts by the African Union to offer policy measures through which governance systems can be strengthened in addressing violent conflicts on the continent.

The meeting will take place on August 5 and 6, 2014, in Accra, Ghana. It will be conducted in French and English and will convene about fifty participants including representatives from the African Union, Regional Economic Communities, the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), the African Development Bank, and from international organizations including the United Nations, the International Organization of La Francophonie, and the World Bank. In addition, civil society representatives including women, the youth, the private sector, experts and academics will be invited to take part in the meeting.

The main outcomes of the Accra meeting will feed into the 2014 High-Level Dialogue on Governance and Democracy in Africa: Trends, Prospects, Challenges and Opportunities, which is scheduled to take place in on October 30 and 31 in Dakar, Senegal, on the theme "Silencing the Guns: Strengthening Governance in Resolving Conflicts in Africa".

DRAFT AGENDA

Tuesday, August 5th

8:30 - 9:00   **Registration**

9:00 - 9:30   **Welcome remarks and opening ceremony**

- **Mr. Brian Kagoro,** *UNDP Regional Service Centre for Africa*

- **Dr. Youssef Mahmoud,** *Senior Adviser, International Peace Institute*

- **Ms. Litha Musyimi Ogana**, *Director, Gender Directorate, African Union Commission*

- **Ms. Lydia Amartey,** *Director, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Ghana*

9:45-10:15   **Keynote Address**

Introduction: **Dr. Youssef Mahmoud**, *Senior Adviser, International Peace Institute*

Keynote Speaker: Ambassador Fatuma Ndangiza, *Chairperson, Panel of Eminent Persons of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)*

10:15 - 10:30   **Coffee break**

10:30 - 13:00   **Session One: Poor governance factors: Identification and analysis**

Chair: **Ambassador Maureen Quinn**, *Director of Programs, International Peace Institute*
Panelists: **Mr. Brian Kagoro,** *UNDP Regional Service Centre for Africa*
              Professor Gilbert Khadiagala, *University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa*
Discussant: **Honorable Emilie Beatrice Epaye**, *National Transitional Council, CAR*

Multiple regional and international frameworks have been adopted over the years to regulate how political power is acquired and exercised and to promote democracy, foster mutually reinforcing relationships between citizens and their leaders and among citizens themselves, and advance human rights and the rule of law. However, inconsistent and poor governance practices, the growing gap between elected leaders and their constituencies, increasing distrust in electoral processes and organized politics, particularly in fragile and conflict-affected societies, underscore the imperative need to deepen understanding of the structural causes of the governance deficits in Africa.

This session will endeavor to answer the following questions:

- What are the local, national, regional and international factors that account for poor governance practices in Africa?

- How do these practices manifest themselves and what is their impact on government institutions, on countries' economic and social development, and on social cohesion, taking into account issues of gender, age and status?

- What linkages can be established between poor political and economic governance, and insecurity and violence?

- How do governance challenges affect post-conflict peacebuilding and reconstruction efforts? What lessons can be drawn from cases such as the Central African Republic, Cote d'Ivoire, Mali and South Sudan for example?

13:00-14:30: **Lunch break**

14:30-17:30: **Session Two: Assessing Governance Responses**

Chair: **Ms. Michelle Ndiaye Ntab**, *Director, Africa Peace and Security Programme – APSP/Tana Forum Head of Secretariat African Union/Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS)*

Panelists: **Mr. Cyril Obi**, *Program Director, African Peacebuilding Network, SSRC*
Dr. Younes Abouyoub, *Political Advisor, UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL)*

The African Union and sub-regional democracy and human rights frameworks, the African Peer Review Mechanism, and the recently formalized African Governance Architecture are some of the norms and processes that have been developed to tackle governance deficits across the continent. However, persistent lack of norms' implementation, weakened monitoring mechanisms and the absence of political will raise questions about the credibility and effectiveness of these responses, and underscore the need for increased coherence between norm setting and performance.

This session will endeavor to answer the following questions:

- What strategies exist to mainstream democratic and accountable governance in post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding initiatives across Africa? What needs to be done differently?
- What limitations continue to hinder the effectiveness of oversight mechanisms that are mandated to advance good governance practices in Africa?
- What can the AU and the RECs do more/better to increase compliance with governance norms?
- What can ordinary citizens, civil society movements and organizations at national, regional and continental levels do to support the effective implementation of existing governance frameworks?

19:00 – 21:00   Welcome Dinner

Wednesday, August 6th

9:00-12:00: **Session Three: Enhancing Governance Practices in Africa: A Citizen's Perspective**

Chair: **Ambassador Fatuma Ndangiza**, Chairperson, Panel of Eminent Persons of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)

Panelists: **Professor Alioune Sall**, *University of South Africa (UNISA)*
Dr. Mireille Affa'a Mindzié, *Research Fellow, International Peace Institute*

Discussant: **Mr. Beny Gideon Mabor**, *African Center for Peace and Humanitarian Dialogue, South Sudan*

Good practices of democratic governance and responsive leadership do exist in Africa. They have often resulted in improved social service delivery, accountable government institutions, effective decentralization policies, and enhanced citizen participation including in fragile and conflict-affected contexts. However, innovative and achievable ways to strengthen effective and inclusive governance remain limited. These need to be further developed, so as to accelerate progress towards achieving sustainable peace, stability and development.

This session will endeavor to answer the following questions:

- What new strategies, mechanisms/processes have recently been devised and implemented to enhance accountable and democratic governance at national level but also at regional and continental levels?
- How can African leadership and citizenship engagement be better stimulated and harnessed to reduce the gap between norms and performance

- What should the AU Commission, the RECs and their international partners do differently to accompany these multi-stakeholder processes?
- What could be the key elements of an AU Roadmap to a conflict-free African continent by 2020?
- What role can citizens, particularly youth, play in devising such a roadmap?

12:00-12:30:   Closing Ceremony

13:00-14:30:   Buffet Lunch