

**Security Council Open Debate
Cooperation Between the UN and Regional and Subregional Organizations
Peace Operations: the UN-African Union Partnership and its Evolution
December 2014, Security Council Chamber**

Statement by Mr. Thoresson Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations.

First, I would like to thank the delegation of Chad for providing this important opportunity to discuss how the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union (AU) can be enhanced.

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Nordic countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and my own country, Sweden. Before going into the substance of today's debate, however, the Nordic countries would like to add their voices of condemnation with regard to the horrendous terrorist attack committed in Pakistan. We offer our sincere condolences to the families of all the victims and to the Government and the people of Pakistan. The Nordic countries attach great importance to peace and security in Africa. We welcome the fact that there has been a deepening of cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations in the past decade. The AU and its member States have demonstrated an increasing ability to contribute to resolving conflicts on the continent. We endorse the important work done by the United Nations Office to the African Union, and we welcome the AU's efforts to strengthen the role of its office here in New York.

We commend the role played by the AU in leading regional missions, such as the African Union Mission in Somalia. At the same time, there are many lessons that we can learn from the cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations in Somalia, as well as in Darfur, Mali and the Central African Republic. We must strive to ensure better complementarity of roles. Difficult issues, such as financing and improved capabilities, must be part of that discussion. The Nordic countries welcome the intention of the AU to develop its civilian and military conflict-management capacities further, and stand ready to support that endeavour. For many years, the Nordic countries have helped to strengthen the institutional capacity of the AU Commission, the Economic Community of West African States, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the Eastern African Standby Force. We also contribute troops, not least to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, as well as military observers, staff officers, police and correction officers and other civilian personnel to both United Nations- and European Union-led peace operations across the continent.

The Nordic countries are dedicated to continue supporting African aspirations and commitments so as to ensure peace, security and stability in the continent. The African Peace and Security Architecture has proved its value as a good framework for that endeavour. We believe that the AU's role in ensuring peace and stability in Africa could be strengthened even further through closer cooperation between the Peace and Security Architecture and the African Governance Architecture.

On this occasion, we would also like to recall General Assembly resolution 68/303, entitled "Strengthening the role of mediation in the peaceful settlement of disputes, conflict prevention and resolution." That resolution stresses the importance of regional organizations

in conflict prevention and resolution, and acknowledges the contribution of the African Union.

The Nordic countries continue to emphasize the importance of the full and active participation of women in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, as well as in post-conflict efforts and cooperation. This is key to building inclusive and sustainable peace and security. Ensuring that the women and peace and security agenda is properly implemented in peacekeeping missions will also increase their effectiveness. In that regard, we commend the African Union for having appointed a Special Envoy for resolution 1325 (2010).

The Nordic commitment to supporting peace and security in Africa is to a large extent focused on tackling the root causes of conflict, instability and fragility. Promoting peace effectively requires a comprehensive approach. Without sustained and inclusive economic growth, without equitable social development that includes men, women and children, without progress in democracy, governance and human rights, we all know that peace and security will be elusive. Fighting poverty, exclusion, injustice and impunity and implementing international law and global norms will therefore always be crucial for promoting long-term peace and security.

Reconstruction and reconciliation after a conflict should also always receive our central support and participation. In that respect, we welcome the African Solidarity Initiative and look forward to its implementation.

We need strategies to avoid fragile States relapsing into conflict. In that regard, peacebuilding and State-building are crucial. The Nordic countries and the African Union are already engaged in knowledge-sharing, and we would welcome further engagement from and exchange with the African Union in the international dialogue on peacebuilding. We welcome the recently held dialogue in Addis Ababa between the African Union Peace and Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission, and we encourage the continued strengthening of such activities during the coming year.

In conclusion, the Nordic countries welcome the particular focus of the Security Council on the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union, which should also be duly reflected in the Secretary-General's review of peace operations. We stand ready to contribute by supporting regional capacity-building and participating directly in international and regional peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts, as well as other conflict-prevention and -management efforts.