

UNITED NATIONS DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS (UN-DPA)

Support to NEPAD

Period of report: 2003-2004

Orientation of work in support of NEPAD

Within the framework of its overall mandate, the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) continued to support one of the priorities of NEPAD namely, **peace and security**. DPA supports the strengthening of regional and sub-regional organizations by building up their capacity in the areas of prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, including post-conflict peace-building, and electoral assistance. With respect to conflict prevention, DPA put emphasis on cooperation with African countries and institutions in developing and promoting effective early warning capacity with a view to helping them prevent tensions from deteriorating into conflict.

Areas of support for NEPAD

The Department continued to support the activities of Special Envoys dispatched by the Secretary-General to various African states to provide timely and discreet facilitation and to prevent tensions from deteriorating into open conflict. The Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa (UNOWA), serves as the Department's operational arm in addressing cross-cutting and cross-border challenges to peace and progress in the West African sub-region. In this connection, the Secretary-General report on ways to combat sub-regional and cross-border problems in West Africa (S/2004/200) identified a number of inter-related problems and urged a closer collaboration of the UN system in tackling them.

Also, DPA has worked closely with UNIFEM and UNDP to support the Mano River Women's Peace Network's work on conflict prevention, early warning, and mediation. In Guinea-Bissau, DPA partnered with local women's organizations, whose contact with leaders of warring parties contributed to bringing them to the negotiation table.

DPA has been working closely with the AU and sub-regional organizations as well as regional countries that lead peace initiatives, e.g. the Regional Peace Initiative on Burundi, the IGAD-led peace processes in Somalia and the Sudan and the mediation efforts between the Government of Sudan and the rebel movements in the Darfur region.

DPA continued to make progress in integrating and coordinating programmes in the area of peace, security and development through its peace-building activities. For example, through its peace-building support offices in the Central African Republic (BONUCA) and Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS), DPA assisted the host Governments in promoting good governance, respect for the rule of law and democracy, as well as helping stabilize the situation following military interventions or other crisis.

Such support is necessary as the AU lacks the capacity, resources and expertise to address all problems that may arise in Africa. It is also desirable since, wherever possible, the international community should strive to complement rather than duplicate or compete with African efforts to resolve Africa's problems.

DPA has been most active in supporting regional peace-making efforts, through cooperation with: the Regional Peace Initiative on Burundi; the IGAD on Somalia and Sudan; the African Union on the Inter-Congolese dialogue; and the African Union on the convening of a Conference on peace and development in the Great Lakes region.

Recommendations for strengthening NEPAD implementation

DPA's main constraint is the sensitivity with which interventions on behalf of good governance and peace and security are

viewed by African countries. The issue of mandates, access and capacity remain a serious impediment to any advisory and preventive role that DPA could play. Joint reviews should be undertaken by African regional and sub-regional organizations of programme implementation regarding General Assembly resolution A/Res/58/233 and possible requests for UN-DPA advice.