

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITY ON DEVELOPMENT



PRESS RELEASE

IGAD NGOs/CSOs FORUM 5th SESSION OF THE REGIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE 05-07 March, 2012, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

The 5th Regular Session of the Regional Steering Committee of IGAD NGO/CSO Forum organised by the Peace and Security Division met in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 5 to 7 March 2012. One government and two NGOs and CSOs representatives took part in the meeting.

The meeting was opened by the Director of the Peace and Security Division. Welcoming the new member of IGAD, South Sudan and the participants to the meeting, she underscored the important role CSOs and NGOs can play in promoting peace and security and advancing the cause of economic development and integration in the IGAD region. Reiterating IGAD's support to the Forum, she stated that the Secretariat is committed to establishing IGAD NGOs and CSOs Desk, but made it clear that the establishment of the Desk was dependent upon the establishment of a well functioning and operationally meaningful national civil societies aimed at the realisation of IGAD NGOs and CSOs three-year development strategic plan and the organisation's peace, security and development agenda.

The Co-Chair of the Regional Steering Committee of the Forum also welcomed participants and opened the three day meeting. The Plenary revisited previously validated strategy plan and discussed ways and means of making it marketable. The CPMR (Conflict Prevention Management & Resolution) representative briefed the meeting about recent developments in capacity building programme and outlined four areas of training activities aimed at acquiring mediation and negotiations skills, improving civil society cooperation with national governments in the field of economic and social development, promoting regional networking and making use of the power of media in the dissemination of information and promotion of visibility.

Furthermore, lessons learned from AU-COSOCC were discussed, making reference to best practises in establishing IGAD NGOs and CSOS Desk. The meeting discussed at length the manner in which the Desk will be established in the future once the necessary conditions have been satisfactorily met. The meeting identified the crucial role the media play in promoting peace and security and encouraged the Forum to engage the media in promoting peace and security, economic development and integration and the image of the IGAD Region.