

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Eastern Africa Standby Brigade (EASBRIG) to Hold Multinational Command Exercise between 24<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> November, 2008 at the International Mines Action Training Centre, Embakasi, Nairobi**

The Eastern Africa Stand-by Brigade (EASBRIG) will be involved in a crucial Command Post Exercise (CPX) in Nairobi to test readiness of the regional force towards operationalisation of the African Standby Force (ASF).

The regional brigade brings together 13 Eastern Africa countries and is part of the African Stand-by Force, also comprising of stand-by brigades from the four other regions of the continent, namely, Southern, Northern, Western and Central Africa.

The Command Post Exercise is the first step towards harmonization of the African Stand-by Force with the other regional brigades, which are required to have completed their exercises by the last quarter of 2009.

The Nairobi CPX will be simulating comprehensive peace support operations in a hypothetical failed African state. The exercise will test the coherence of various leadership players, and the degree of integration of the region. It will also test the ability of the region to plan and execute a mission.

The exercise will be held between **24<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> November, 2008** at the **International Mines Action Training Centre**, Embakasi, Nairobi.

The Guest of Honour during the opening ceremony on **24<sup>th</sup> November, 2008 at 9.00AM** will be **Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon. Moses Wetangula**, who will be accompanied by Kenya's **Chief of General Staff, Gen. Jeremiah Kianga** and the **Chairman of the Chiefs of Defence Staff of the region, Brig. Gen. Salimou Amiri** from the Comoros.

There will be a press conference at **9.00AM**, followed by a special “**raising of the flag**” ceremony to symbolize the region's coherence and solidarity. The CPX will start shortly after the opening speeches to launch the Command Post Exercise for the Eastern Africa Standby Force.

### **Brief Background**

The AU developed an African common defence and security policy in 2004 that would pave the way towards to the full establishment of an African Stand-by

Force capable of rapid deployment by 2010. The first task was the establishment and operationalisation of the regional standby forces that would also include the non-military component of the police and civilians.

The AU timeline for full African Stand-by Force operationalisation includes conducting Field Training Exercises (FTX) in 2009 that will include the lower structures of the soldiers, police and civilians of lower rank, and will also involve the commanders and leadership of the non-military component.

The EASBRIG will have an initial brigade military component of about 6,000, with an additional 2,000 to 3,000 drawn from the non-military component. It is due to the largeness of the that it is necessary to test the leadership and command of the regional force in the Command Post Exercise to ensure that there is proper understanding of instructions or a mandate handed down by the policy organs. This is important as it involves more than one nation, as the commanders and civil leadership are variously distributed in the command structure.

The target group to be exercised will comprise 110 EASBRIG force leaders. They will include 65 brigade headquarters military staff, 20 battalion command staff, with the rest comprising police and civilians.

EASBRIG member states include Kenya, Somalia, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Sudan and Tanzania, the Comoros, Seychelles, Madagascar and Mauritius.

Tanzania and Madagascar have however opted to contribute their forces to the Southern Region. Though in the Central Africa Region, Burundi has opted to join the Eastern Africa Region.

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