



CONDUCTING AMANI AFRICA II FIELD TRAINING EXERCISE THE REALISATION OF THE AFRICAN DREAM

All roads led to the South African Army Combat Training Centre where the long awaited AMANI AFRICA II FIELD TRAINING EXERCISE (AA II FTX) was launched on 19 October 2015. It was a great day as dignitaries were heading towards the parade ground to witness the grand opening of the African Union Multi-dimensional Peace Support Operations where Military, Police and Civilian components took part in this history making event. The hosting region, Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Host Nation, the Republic of South Africa, pulled all stops to showcase the highlights of the progress made in preparation of the event of such magnitude.

More than a decade ago, in line with the growing political ambitions of African States to play a stronger role in relation to peace and security on the continent, AU members decided to establish their own rapidly deployable, multi-dimensional peace operations capability. With the delay over an uneven course, the AU member States mandated the creation of a quick reaction force as a stop gap measure until the Africa Standby Force (ASF) was ready. That force became known as African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crisis (ACIRC) which provided the quick solution, however today, the ACIRC will be used as another capability of the ASF which will be integrated into a single concept of the Rapid Deployment Capability. The African Standby Force consists of five regional standby capabilities comprising of approximately 5000 personnel each.

AMANI AFRICA as is a Kiswahili name for Peace in Africa which is a brainchild of African Heads of States who were of the opinion that Africa as a continent has to implement African solutions to African challenges. AA II FTX provides the climax to an extremely ambitious training cycle designed to validate the African Standby Force (ASF) within the broader architecture of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). This brought an idea of AA II roadmap which is now at the stage of Field Training Exercise in validating the capacity of the African Union to mandate and employ a Rapid Deployment Capacity (RDC) of the ASF as a start-up operation

(Scenario 6) to deal with grave circumstances and to run a full multidimensional Peace Support Operation (Scenario 5) where intervention will have yielded results.

Although it was not an easy road, AU, SADC, RECs and RMs, the Republic of South Africa pulled all plugs to successfully host the opening ceremony of the AA II FTX held on the parade ground of the SAACTC, Lohatla in the RSA on 19 October 2015. The ceremony was attended by high level delegation led by Minister of Defence and Military Veterans of the Republic of South Africa, Hon. Nosiviwe Noluthando Mapisa-Nqakula, the representative of the AU Chairperson, Hon Dr S.T. Sekeramayi, Minister of Defence of the Republic of Zimbabwe and HE Ambassador S. Chergui, Commissioner for Peace and Security in the AUC.

SADC contributes in this multidimensional exercise with 1210 personnel from the military, police and civilian components. It should be noted that the African Standby Force became a key component of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) which is meant to reach full operational capability by December 2015.



