MESSAGE TO KENYA NATIONAL ELECTIONS CONFERENCE:

“WORKING TOGETHER TOWARDS A CREDIBLE AND PEACEFUL GENERAL ELECTION”

Nairobi 12 – 14 June 2017

Excellencies,

Chairperson of the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC)

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to congratulate you all for this initiative aimed at “Working together towards a credible and peaceful general election.”

Kenya has demonstrated its unwavering commitment to democracy over the years.

Kenya’s forthcoming election is therefore of critical importance not just for Kenyans but across the continent; it is no theirs alone, but for all of Africa.

Kenya has strong institutions and a vibrant civil society. You have pursued a number of fundamental reforms, including creating a national peace network which contributed to the successful holding of elections in 2013.

In so doing, you sent a signal of your determination to prevent your country from ever again suffering from election-related violence. Whereas the journey of these elections has presented some challenges, I am confident that Kenyans will find common ground to ensure the holding of credible and peaceful general elections on 8 August. I urge the Kenyan political actors and the people to respect the independence and decisions of the institutions constitutionally mandated to conduct the elections and adjudicate election-related disputes, the IEBC and the judiciary.

Likewise, it is your collective responsibility to reject and denounce all forms of hate speech and the use of inflammatory language, and to enable the voices of all Kenyans to be heard during this critical period.

I am pleased that the Government and others are strengthening election security so as to swiftly act on threats and risks of violence.

I call on the leadership of the various political parties to respect the outcome of the elections and to use the existing legal channels to address grievances. I also urge their supporters to promote political tolerance and non-violence during this critical period.

Kenya remains a beacon of stability, and a critical partner in support of peace initiatives, including in the Horn of Africa. More than ever the world needs Kenya to remain resolute in its commitment to peace and progress in the region.

I highly value the long-standing and fruitful collaboration and partnership between Kenya and the United Nations, and will continue to support your country’s unwavering efforts in the consolidation of democracy at home and in our shared work for peace across the region.

In that spirit, I wish you a productive national conference. Asanteni sana.