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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. P.O. Box: 3243 Tel.: (251-11) 5513 822 Fax: (251-11) 5519 321

Email: situationroom@africa-union.org

PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
1145TH MEETING

31 MARCH 2023
ADDIS-ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/COMM.1145 (2023)

COMMUNIQUÉ



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Adopted by the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) at its 1145th meeting on 31 March 2023 on Consideration of the report on the outcomes of the PSC Field Mission to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) conducted from 20 to 23 March 2023;

The Peace and Security Council,

Recalling its previous decisions and pronouncements on the situation in the DRC, particularly Communiqué [PSC/HoSG/COMM.1140 (2023)] adopted at its 1140th meeting, held at the level of Heads of State and Government on 17 February 2023;

Reiterating AU's commitment as one of the Guarantors of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Region (Framework Agreement) signed on 24 February 2013 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to ensure its full implementation and support of the ongoing stabilisation efforts in the Great Lakes Region by the DRC, neighbouring countries, as well as International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), East African Community (EAC) and Southern African Development Community (SADC);

Noting the opening remarks and the presentation of the Field Mission Report by H.E. Ambassador Willy Nyamitwe, Head of the PSC Delegation for the Field Mission to the DRC from 20 to 23 March 2023, and statement by H.E. Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security; **further noting** the closing remarks by H.E. Ambassador Innocent Shiyo, the Permanent Representative of the United Republic of Tanzania to the AU and PSC Chairperson for March 2023;

Reaffirming the unwavering commitment of the AU to respect the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of the DRC and **further reaffirming** the solidarity of the AU with the people and the Government of the DRC in their legitimate aspirations for peace, stability and socio-economic development; and

Acting under Article 7 of its Protocol, the Peace and Security Council,

1. **Adopts** the report of the Field Mission to the DRC and the recommendations contained therein;
2. **Expresses concern** over the tensions between the DRC and Rwanda; in this regard, **calls** for calm and concerted efforts towards reconciling the two sisterly countries through dialogue in furtherance of sustainable peace in the region;
3. **Further expresses concern** about the dire humanitarian situation in the eastern DRC and **calls** on Member States, humanitarian partners and the international community to redouble their efforts in addressing the humanitarian needs and alleviating the suffering of the affected population; and **further calls** for the convening of a Humanitarian Pledging Conference to support the humanitarian response and address the challenges in the eastern DRC;
4. **Condemns, in the strongest terms**, the terror attacks on civilians and targeted attacks against the FARDC by the various armed groups operating in the eastern DRC; **further strongly condemns** the human rights abuses and violations of international conventions committed by the March 23 Movement (M23), the Allied Democratic Forces/ Madinat Tawhid wa-l-Muwahidin ADF/MTM, Forces

Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda (FDLR) and all other armed groups in the country; and **calls** for perpetrators of these heinous crimes to face the full might of law;

5. **Reiterates the call** for M23, FDLR, ADF/MTM and all other armed groups to withdraw from the eastern DRC unconditionally, disarm and cease hostilities; **calls** for the international community to impose sanctions on the armed groups to deter them from their terror activities; **further calls** for AU Member States and partners to provide the requisite support on the implementation of the national disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programme;

6. **Strongly condemns** the illicit exploration and exploitation of, and trade in, mineral resources in the eastern parts of the DRC; **calls** for the vigilance of the international community to ensure that illicitly exploited minerals are not traded; **further calls** for respect of the ICGLR Protocol on Combating Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources;

7. **Reiterates its endorsement** of the Luanda and Nairobi Processes; **encourages** close coordination and harmonisation of efforts to maximise resources and ensure effective and timeous implementation of commitments; and **emphasises** the imperative of armed groups to honour their commitments in the spirit and letter of the various agreements facilitated by the Luanda and Nairobi processes;

8. **Underscores** the need to address the underlying root causes and drivers associated with youth participation in violence, including through supporting socio-economic empowerment programs aimed at economically empowering the people, especially the women and youth, in order to re-orient them away from the politics of identity to the politics of interests;

9. **Reiterates its call** for support towards the Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism (EJVM);

10. **Expresses profound gratitude** to the Government and people of the DRC for their hospitality and availability to engage with the PSC Delegation; **also expresses gratitude** to all the stakeholders who availed themselves to interact with the PSC Delegation and for their valuable perspectives;

11. **Takes note** of the readiness of the Government of the DRC to hold elections scheduled to take place in December 2023; **underscores** the need for the AU Commission to engage the Government of the DRC in preparations for the upcoming elections and provide the required support;

12. **Further express gratitude** to the AU Liaison Office in Kinshasa, under the leadership of the Special Representative of the AU Commission Chairperson in the DRC, for their role in facilitating the successful conduct of the Field Mission; and **encourages** them to tirelessly promote AU efforts as one of the Guarantors of the Framework Agreement; and **reiterates the need** for increased visibility and permanent presence of the AU in Goma, eastern DRC;

13. **Welcomes** the progress made by the AU Commission in implementing the 1140th PSC Communiqué [PSC/HoSG/COMM.1140 (2023)] adopted on 17 February 2023, particularly paragraphs 4 and 9 relating to the collaboration of the Framework Agreement Guarantors, East African Community (EAC) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) on the revitalization of the Framework Agreement, and the financial support towards the operations of the EAC Regional Force; in this regard, **welcomes** the Technical Consultations meeting of the Guarantors of the Framework Agreement, the EAC and ECCAS held on 29 March 2023; and the commitment of financial support to the EAC Regional Force ; and **requests** the AU Commission to submit all the necessary reports and budget allocations for the Council's consideration and adoption; and

14. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.