

AFRICAN UNION
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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL 259TH MEETING
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA
28 JANUARY 2011

PSC/AHG/COMM(CCLIX)

COMMUNIQUE

COMMUNIQUE OF THE 259th MEETING
OF THE PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL

The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 259th meeting held on 28 January 2011, at the level of the Heads of State and Government, adopted the following decision on the situation in Cote d'Ivoire:

Council,

1. **Takes note** of the statement made by the Chairperson of the Commission on the situation in Cote d'Ivoire. Council **also takes note** of the statements made by President Goodluck Jonathan of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, in his capacity as the Chair of the Economic Community of the West African States (ECOWAS), and President Blaise Compaore of Burkina Faso, in his capacity as the Facilitator of the Direct Inter-Ivorian Dialogue, as well as the President of ECOWAS Commission, Victor Gbeho;
2. **Reaffirms** its previous decisions on the situation in Cote d'Ivoire, in particular the press statement issued by its 251st meeting held on 4 December 2010 and the communique of the 252nd meeting held on 9 December 2010, as well as the communiqués of the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS issued on 7 and 24 December 2010, respectively, recognizing Mr. Alassane Dramane Ouattara as the President-Elect from the presidential election held on 28 November 2010, on the basis of the results as certified by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations in conformity with resolution 1765 of 16 July 2007 and the different agreements signed by the Ivorian parties and endorsed by ECOWAS, AU and the United Nations;
3. **Expresses satisfaction** with the initiatives taken by ECOWAS and the Commission of the AU, with a view to finding a peaceful solution to the crisis respecting the democratic choice of the Ivoirians. In particular, Council **pays tribute** to the Chair of ECOWAS, Presidents Thomas Yayi Boni of Benin, Pedro Pires of Cape Verde and Ernest Bai Koroma of Sierra Leone, as well as to Prime Minister Raila Odinga of Kenya and former Presidents Thabo Mbeki of South Africa and Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, for their contributions to the search for a peaceful solution to the crisis in Cote d'Ivoire. Council **also expresses its appreciation** for the efforts deployed by the different partners of the AU and the international community as a whole, and **stresses** the importance of mobilizing co-ordinated support to the efforts of Africa, which has the primary responsibility for the management and resolution of this crisis, in conformity with all relevant instruments of the AU and ECOWAS;
4. **Expresses it deep concern** with the serious political crisis prevailing in Cote d'Ivoire since the announcement of the results of the second round of the presidential election of 28 November 2010. **Council strongly condemns** the abuses and other violations of human rights, threats and acts of intimidation, as well as acts of obstruction against the activities of the United Nations Operations in Cote d'Ivoire (ONUCI), and **regrets** the loss of life and acts of destruction of property which took place in some parts of Cote d'Ivoire;

5. **Reaffirms** the necessity of a rapid peaceful solution which will allow for the preservation of democracy and peace, through the respect for the will of the Ivorian people, as expressed on 28 November 2010, and which will foster lasting reconciliation among all Ivorian parties through dialogue;
6. **Decides**, in light of the above, to put in place, under the authority of the African Union, a High-Level Panel for the resolution of the crisis, in conditions which preserve democracy and peace. Council **decides** that the Panel, whose composition will be finalized, following appropriate consultations, during the 16th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union, scheduled to take place on 30 and 31 January 2011, shall operate as follows:
 - a) the Panel will be supported by a team of experts and will work, when necessary, in close cooperation with partners of the AU, particularly the United Nations,
 - b) the Panel is mandated to evaluate the situation and formulate, on the basis of the relevant decisions of the AU and ECOWAS, an overall political solution,
 - c) the Panel will conclude its work within a period not exceeding one month and its conclusions, which will be endorsed by Council, will be binding on all the Ivorian parties with which these conclusions would have been negotiated;
7. **Demands** the immediate removal of the siege on Hotel du Golf and an end to all acts of violence and abuses against the civilian population, as well as calls, wherever they come from, having the effect of inciting hatred and violence;
8. **Underscores**, in the context of the resolution of the crisis in its totality, the importance of the pursuit of efforts with a view to accomplishing the pending aspects of the peace process, in particular the holding of legislative elections, national reconciliation, reunification of the country, disarmament of ex-combatants and the dismantlement of militias, reform of the security sector and the restoration of the authority of the State in the whole country;
9. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.