

AFRICAN UNION

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**PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL 516TH MEETING
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA
22 JUNE 2015**

PSC/PR/COMM.(DXVI)

COMMUNIQUE

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The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 516th meeting held on 22 June 2015, adopted the following decision on the situation in Darfur and the activities of the AU- United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID):

Council,

1. **Takes note** of the report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the situation in Darfur and the activities of UNAMID [PSC/PR/2(DXVI)], as well as of the introductory remarks made by the Commission and the briefing provided by Ambassador Abiodun Bashua, Acting Joint Special Representative for UNAMID. Council **also takes note** of the statements made by the representatives of the Government of Sudan;
2. **Recalls** its previous communiques and press statements on the situation in Darfur, including communiques PSC/PR/COMM.(CDXXV) and PSC/PR/COMM.(CDXXVI), adopted at its 425th and 446th meetings, held on 24 March and 9 July 2014;
3. **Reiterates its firm support** to the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD) as a viable framework for bringing lasting peace and reconciliation in Darfur. In this context, Council **welcomes** the progress made in the implementation of the DDPD, as illustrated by the steps recently taken towards the implementation of its final security arrangements; the launching of the Justice, Truth and Reconciliation Commission that is expected to work with the native administration to address the root causes of the conflict in Darfur; and the completion of the outreach programme and the commencement of the Darfur Internal Dialogue and Consultation (DIDC) process;
4. **Encourages** the DDPD Parties to expedite their efforts towards addressing the outstanding issues, and **calls on** the international community to enhance its support to the implementation of the DDPD;
5. **Reiterates its appreciation** to the UNAMID leadership, in particular the Acting Joint Special Representative, as well as the Force Commander and the Police Commissioner, and the Mission's personnel, for their dedication and contribution to the promotion of peace, security, stability and reconciliation in the Darfur region of Sudan. Council **notes with satisfaction** the progress made in the implementation of UNAMID's mandate, particularly with respect to the protection of civilians. In this regard, Council **pays tribute** to the UNAMID personnel who have paid the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty for the cause of peace in Darfur;
6. **Notes with satisfaction** the ongoing efforts by UNAMID to implement the recommendations of the Review conducted by a Joint AU/UN Team in December 2013, and **welcomes** the progress made in streamlining UNAMID's components and implementing the strategic priority areas as identified by the Review Team, including the protection of civilians; the facilitation of the delivery of humanitarian assistance and the safety and security of humanitarian personnel; mediation between the Government of Sudan and non-signatory armed movements on the basis of the DDPD, while taking into account the ongoing democratic transformation at the national level; and support to mediation of communal conflict, including measures to address its root causes, in conjunction with the UN Country Team (UNCT);
7. **Strongly condemns** all hostile actions and attacks against UNAMID personnel and assets, as well

as against humanitarian organizations and their staff, and **urges** the Government of Sudan to spare no efforts to arrest and prosecute all perpetrators of these criminal acts, including the establishment of a dedicated Commission of Inquiry. In this respect, Council **requests** the Government of Sudan to provide, at its next meeting on the situation in Darfur, an update on the steps taken to identify and bring to justice the perpetrators of these crimes;

8. **Expresses concern** at the continued restrictions imposed on UNAMID, which hampers its operations, and **calls on** the Government of Sudan and all other stakeholders to lift all restrictions and cooperate fully with UNAMID to enable it effectively implement its mandate. In this respect, Council **requests** the Government of Sudan to provide, at its next meeting on the situation in Darfur, an update on the measures taken to remove restrictions;

9. **Appeals** to the AU Member States and the larger international community to continue to provide the much-needed support, with a view to enhancing the capacity of UNAMID to more effectively discharge its mandate and to alleviate the humanitarian crisis in Darfur;

10. **Expresses deep concern** at the renewed clashes between the Government of Sudan and the armed movements in Jebel Marra, North and South Darfur in the past months, and the upsurge in inter-tribal fighting, especially the recent clashes between the Ma'alia and the Rezeigat that have resulted in major loss of lives, destruction of property and new displacements of civilian populations. Council **urges** renewed efforts to address the prevailing situation and, in this respect, **commends** UNAMID for the initiatives taken to support local and national mediation efforts to mitigate and prevent inter-ethnic and inter-communal conflicts and facilitate their resolution, in line with the strategic priorities identified by the Review Team. Council **encourages** the Government of Sudan to pursue and intensify its efforts to prevent the recurrence of such deadly clashes by speedily addressing their root causes;

11. **Expresses deep concern** about the continued human rights violations in Darfur, including the increase in sexual and gender-based violence. Council **strongly condemns** these violations and **reiterates** its previous calls on the Government of Sudan to take appropriate measures to address the situation, notably by identifying their perpetrators and bringing them to justice. In this respect, again, Council **requests** the Government of Sudan to provide, at its next meeting on the situation in Darfur, an update on the measures taken to address human rights violations in Darfur;

12. **Welcomes** the capacity building support provided by UNAMID and the UNCT to Sudanese governmental institutions and civil society organizations in the area of human rights, and **requests** the Mission to pursue and intensify its efforts in this regard;

13. **Expresses concern** at the prevailing humanitarian situation in Darfur, including the significant increase in the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs). Council **requests** all parties in Darfur to facilitate the work of the humanitarian agencies, ensure their security and guarantee unimpeded access to the needy populations. Council **appeals** for renewed international efforts to mobilize additional resources and capacities to meet the humanitarian needs on the ground;

14. **Appeals** to all the parties to the conflict to cease all acts of violence in Darfur and to recommit themselves to the peaceful resolution of the conflict in the region. In this respect, Council **calls on** the Government of Sudan and the holdout armed movements to commit to direct political talks for a durable and sustainable solution to the Darfur conflict. Council **reiterates** its full support to the AU High-Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) for its efforts to facilitate a cessation of hostilities between the Government of Sudan and the Darfur armed movements. Council **encourages** the AUHIP to pursue its

efforts to ensure the early resumption of the negotiations between the Parties that were suspended on 29 November 2014, because of disagreement on the agenda of the talks. Council **expresses appreciation** to Chad for its contribution to the search for peace and reconciliation in the Darfur region of Sudan;

15. **Stresses** the need for continued efforts to address the Darfur crisis as part of the holistic approach to the challenges of peace, governance and democracy in Sudan, and **notes** that the National Dialogue initiative, announced by President Omar Hassan al-Bashir in January 2014, provides a unique opportunity that the Government of Sudan and all other stakeholders should seize in order to advance peace and reconciliation in Sudan, taking into account Decision Assembly/AU/ Dec.501(XXII), by which the Assembly declared 2014-2024 as the Madiba Nelson Mandela Decade of Reconciliation in Africa. In this respect, Council **reiterates** the provisions of communique PSC/PR/COMM.(CDLVI) adopted at its 456th meeting held on 12 September 2014, in which it recognized the importance of the National Dialogue process as an authentic, transparent, inclusive and fair process, initiated and owned by the people of Sudan to bring about lasting peace across the entire country, and mandated the AUHIP to take a number of steps in support of this process;

16. **Recalls** the request contained in UN Security Council resolution of 2173 (2014) of 7 August 2014, calling for the UN Secretary-General, in close coordination with the AU and all relevant parties, to make recommendations on the future mandate, composition, configuration and exit strategy of UNAMID, as well as on its relationship with other UN actors in Sudan. Council **further recalls** the request of the Government of Sudan for UNAMID to prepare an exit strategy, as conveyed by its letter of 15 December 2014 addressed to the UN Secretary-General;

17. **Notes with satisfaction** the setting up of the AU-UN-Government of Sudan Joint Working Group (JWG) to develop an exit strategy, in accordance with the benchmarks set by Council and the UN Security Council, that can facilitate a gradual and phased hand-over of UNAMID's mandated tasks to the Sudanese Government and the UNCT Team, without prejudice to the security and humanitarian situation in Darfur. In this connection, Council **commends** the JWG for the constructive and cordial approach to its tasks, and **stresses the need** for pragmatism and flexibility in the development of a phased and gradual exit of UNAMID, in order to further peace in Darfur and avoid undermining the gains made. Council **calls for** the early resumption of consultations between the AU, the UN and the Government of Sudan on the development of an exit strategy for UNAMID;

18. **Notes** that the three strategic priorities of UNAMID remain crucial, and **reiterates** the critical importance of the continued presence of UNAMID in Darfur, in order to contribute to the protection of the civilian population and facilitate the search for peace, security, stability and reconciliation in the region. Accordingly, Council **decides** to extend, for a further period of 12 months, the mandate of UNAMID as defined in communique PSC/PR/Comm.(LXXIX) of its 79th meeting held on 22 June 2007 and in UN Security Council resolution 1769 (2007) of 31 July 2007. Council **requests** the UN Security Council to do the same;

19. **Requests the Commission and UNAMID to provide quarterly updates on the evolution of the situation and the implementation of UNAMID mandate;**

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