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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL 694TM MEETING 15 JUNE 2017 ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/COMM.(DCXCIV)

COMMUNIQUE

The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), at its 694th meeting held in Addis Ababa on 15 June 2017, considered the Report of the AU Technical and Multi-Disciplinary Needs Assessment Mission to the Republic of The Gambia and adopted the following decision:

Council,

1. **Takes note** of the Report of the AU Technical and Multi-Disciplinary Needs Assessment Mission to the Republic of The Gambia, which took place from 13 to 19 May 2017. Council **also takes note** of the introductory remarks made by the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, H.E. Ambassador Smail Chergui and of the presentation by the Commission of the Report of the AU Technical and Multi-Disciplinary Needs Assessment Mission to the Republic of The Gambia. Council **further takes note** of the statements made by the representatives of The Gambia, Senegal in its capacity as an African Member of the United Nations Security Council (A3), and Togo in its capacity as the Chairperson of the Economic Community of West African Countries (ECOWAS);
2. **Commends** former President Pierre Buyoya and all members of the Assessment Mission for their hard work and commitment in the discharge of their mandate and for having submitted a detailed Report to Council. In the same context, Council **commends** the Commission for conducting the assessment within the framework of the Inter-Departmental Task Force on PCRD;
3. **Stresses the importance** of an all-inclusive national dialogue, as the only viable approach to foster national reconciliation and social cohesion in The Gambia. Council **also stresses the importance** of participation of all Gambians, including those in the diaspora, the private sector, women and youth in all efforts aimed at stabilizing the country and creating conducive conditions for economic recovery;
4. **Underlines the need** for enhanced collaboration and coordination between the AU and ECOWAS, as well as all bilateral and multilateral partners of The Gambia, with a view to avoiding duplication of efforts and ensuring rationalized utilization of scarce resources;
5. **Underscores** the importance of mainstreaming gender and empowerment of women in The Gambia's current transformation process. In this context, Council **commends** the National Gender Policy of the Gambia and **calls on** the Commission to support the revamping of the institutions that were created under the Policy;
6. **Welcomes** the Final Communique of the 51st ECOWAS Summit held on 4 June 2017, in Monrovia, in particular the extension of the mandate of ECOWAS Mission in the Gambia (ECOMIG) for an additional period of twelve (12) months, as well as the decision to establish an International Contact Group on the Gambia ICG-G, and **requests** the Commission to immediately engage ECOWAS to agree on the modalities for the establishment of the ICG-G, which will serve as a coordination platform for regional and international support to the country;

7. **Calls on** the AU, in coordination with ECOWAS, to provide policy guidance support to the

Gambian authorities on the identified priority areas of national dialogue and reconciliation, security sector reform, and socio-economic transformation.

8. **Underscores** the need to mobilise African resources, in coordination with ECOWAS, among others, through the convening of a pledging conference or making direct appeals to Member States to provide support in specific priority areas, based on the AU experience with Sudan, South Sudan, as well as in the context of the fight against Ebola in West Africa. In this regard, Council **also underscores the importance** of all those who have made pledges to support The Gambia to urgently honour their pledges;

9. **Recommends** the establishment of a Ministerial Committee on PCRDR in The Gambia and **requests** the Commission to dispatch a Ministerial Delegation to The Gambia to better understand the exact nature of the required support expected from Africa and the international community at large, as well as to re-assure the Gambian people of the AU solidarity;

10. **Also requests** the Commission and AU Member States to second Experts to The Gambia. In this context, Council **calls on** the Commission to provide all necessary support for Security Sector Reform in The Gambia, including the immediate secondment, by AU Member States, at their own costs, of five (5) staff officers to support the reorganization of The Gambian Armed Forces. Council **further requests** the Commission to deploy three (3) Human Rights Experts, as well as a Senior Rule of Law Adviser in The Gambia and other Experts to assist in the process of transitional justice;

11. **Also further requests** the Commission, through its Special Representative to ECOWAS in Abuja, to exercise an oversight role on the efforts aimed at further strengthening the identified key public institutions in The Gambia;

12. **Expresses** the AU commitment to support the Government of The Gambia in its engagement with international creditors for immediate debt relief and to help in mobilizing required resources for the identified critical areas;

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