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**PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL 778TH MEETING 11 JUNE 2018
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**

PSC/PR/COMM. (DCCLXXVIII)

COMMUNIQUE

The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), at its 778th meeting held on 11 June 2018, considered the Special Report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the Strategic Review of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) S/2018/530 of 1 June 2018 and the renewal of the UNAMID mandate and adopted the following decision:

Council:

1. **Takes note** of the Joint Special Report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the strategic review of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, which was undertaken to Khartoum and Darfur from 2 to 13 April 2018, as well as of the introductory remarks by Acting Director for Peace and Security, Dr. Admore Kambudzi delivered on behalf of Ambassador Smail Chergui, the Commissioner for Peace and Security, and the presentation provided by the Joint Special Representative (JSR) of UNAMID, Ambassador Jeremiah Kingsley Mamabolo. Council **also takes note** of the statements made by the representatives of Sudan and Ethiopia, in its capacity as Chair of Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and an African Member in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), as well as those of the Permanent Members of the UNSC, namely, France, United Kingdom and the United States of America;
2. **Recalls** its previous communiqués and press statements on the situation in Darfur, including communiqués PSC/PR/COMM.(DCV) and PSC/PR/COMM.(DCLXXIII), adopted at its 605th and 673rd meetings, held on 13 June 2016 and 29 March 2017, respectively. Council **also recalls** the UN Security Council resolutions 2033 (2012) of 12 January 2012, 2296 (2016) of 29 June 2016 and 2363 (2017) of 6 June 2017;
3. **Acknowledges** the over ten years of UNAMID's contribution to the Darfur peace process and consequently in protecting the lives of ordinary Darfuris. Moreover, Council **reiterates its appreciation** to past and present UNAMID leadership, in particular the current JSR, the Force Commander and the Police Commissioner, as well as all the Mission's personnel, for their continued dedication and contribution to the promotion of peace, security, stability and reconciliation in Darfur. Once again, Council **notes with appreciation** the efforts 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;
4. **Commends** the UNAMID JSR, in support of the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP), for his continued cooperation and coordination with the Government of the Sudan and the non-signatory movements and encourages them to intensify efforts towards the political resolution of the crisis in Darfur. Council **welcomes** all efforts that could lead to the resolution of the situation in Darfur and thus **commends** all the international players who have contributed towards these peace efforts, particularly the Governments of Qatar, Germany and the United States of America. Council **encourages** all parties to the conflict, especially the armed movements, to recommit to the political process on the basis of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD). In this light, Council **also urges** those countries that are hosting the armed movements to commit to the peaceful search for a lasting solution in the

Darfur region. Council **underscores** that such commitments, pave the way for cessation of hostilities agreement and direct negotiations;

5. **Expresses grave concern** over the recent outbreak of clashes between the Sudan Liberation Army/Abdul Wahid and Government security forces in the Jebel Marra area and the attacks in Tarantara and Kara in South Darfur, which resulted in reports of burning of a number of villages and the displacement of civilians. Council **condemns** these attacks in the strongest terms possible and **calls on** the Government of Sudan to grant access to UNAMID personnel to carry out independent verification of such incidents;

6. **Notes with deep concern** the humanitarian situation of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the camps and **urges** the Government of Sudan and the international community to redouble their efforts to ensure that the IDPs are supplied with basic needs and guaranteed voluntarily return to their home lands in a peacefully manner. Council **emphasizes** that the humanitarian situation in Darfur remains a major concern and the recent fighting lends credence to these concerns. Meanwhile, Council **urges** the Government of Sudan and the humanitarian actors to work together in order to ensure unhindered and unrestricted, timely access to the affected population. Furthermore, Council **expresses grave concern** over heightened reports of sexual violence in Darfur and **calls on** the Government of Sudan to engage in full investigation on these reports and to immediately bring the perpetrators to book;

7. **Urges** the Government of Sudan and the Darfur armed movements to exercise maximum restraint and thus cease and desist from engaging in deadly clashes as they continue to cause unnecessary deaths and displace civilians;

8. **Notes with grave concern** the difficulties faced by returning populations in gaining access to their lands and engaging in gainful livelihood activities. Council **acknowledges** that for sustainable returns to take place in Darfur, concerted efforts will need to be exerted towards addressing the root causes of the conflict, particularly security and land ownership, as well delivery of public services. Council thus **appeals** to the Government of Sudan to ensure that returning communities do so voluntarily in safety and dignity, in line with existing international standards;

9. **Commends** the Government of Sudan, with the support of UNAMID, for the efforts deployed towards arms collection, which has the potential to contribute to the stabilization of security situation in Darfur and **encourages** the Government to sustain this exercise, in a balanced and equitable manner, to ensure that the arms collection process is both efficient and effective;

10. **Emphasizes** the need of stabilizing the security sector within the framework of the DDPD and the African Union Policy Framework on Security Sector Reform, which ensures national decision and ownership of the security reform, and alignment with conflict prevention, peace processes and post conflict reconstruction;

11. **Urges** the Government of Sudan, through the residual committees of the Darfur Regional Authority (DRA), to intensify efforts towards addressing land issues, IDP returns, reconciliation, peace building and addressing the root causes of the conflict in Darfur, especially the underlying conflict drivers, including land and resources distribution, which remain largely unaddressed. Council **underlines** the need for UNAMID and the UN Country Team to continue working closely with the Government of Sudan to

ensure that there is enough international support for this key initiative. Council **requests** the AU Commission to provide political support to this initiative, through direct engagement with the Government of Sudan;

12. **Reiterates its support** to the request of the Government of Sudan to the United Nations for Darfur to be placed on the agenda of the UN Peacebuilding Commission (UNPBC). In this regard, Council **decides** to engage the UNPBC, on the margin of its 12th Annual Joint Consultative Meeting with the UNSC, to be held in July 2018 in New York, United States of America;

13. **Requests** the AU Commission to dispatch to Darfur an AU assessment mission to engage the Government of Sudan, UNAMID and the UN Country Team, with a view to identifying areas of post-conflict reconstruction and reconciliation to avoid a relapse to conflict;

14. While welcoming the proposal by the Special Report of the Secretary General and the AU Commission Chairperson that the UNAMID would exit on 30 June 2020 and its liquidation be completed by December 2020, Council **notes**, however, that consideration should be given to:

- a. Ensuring a gradual drawdown that would allow the Mission's exit to be guided by the political and security situation on the ground so as not to create a security vacuum and expose civilian populations;
- b. The area of operation for UNAMID should be retained as the whole geographic Darfur given the fact that the Mission retains the responsibility to protect civilians under threat in the entire region of Darfur;

15. **Decides** to adopt the Special Report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the Strategic Review of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur;

16. **Furthermore, decides** to extend, for a further period of 12 months, the mandate of UNAMID, in line with the recommendations contained in the Special Report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the Strategic Review of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur. Council **requests** the UN Security Council to do the same;

17. **Decides** to remain seized of the matter.