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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL 797TH MEETING AT MINISTERIAL LEVEL

24 SEPTEMBER 2018 NEW YORK, USA

PSC/MIN. (DCCXCVII)

COMMUNIQUE

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The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), at its 797th meeting held on 24 September 2018, at the ministerial level, adopted the following decision on the State of Peace and Security in Africa and the Initiatives and Steps for Promoting African Solutions to African Problems:

Council:

1. **Takes note** of the opening statements made by the Chairperson of the PSC for the month of September 2018, H.E. Manuel Domingos Augusto, Minister of External Relations of the Republic of Angola and by the Chairperson of the AU Commission, H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat. Council **also takes note** of the presentation made by the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, H.E. Ambassador Smail Chergui, as well as of the briefings made by the Director of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, Mr. Jorge Cardoso, and by the representative of Cote d'Ivoire, in its capacity as the Coordinator of the African Members of the United Nations Security Council (A3);

2. **Recalls** the AU Vision of an integrated, stable, peaceful and prosperous Africa; Agenda 2063 and all its seven aspirations, particularly aspiration number 4 (a peaceful and secure Africa); the Organization of African Unity/African Union (OAU/AU) 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration adopted on 25 May 2013, in Addis Ababa, in which the Assembly of the Union pledged not to bequeath the burden of wars to the next generation of Africans and undertook to end all wars in Africa by the year 2020; Decision Assembly/AU/Dec/630 (XXVIII) by which the 28th Ordinary Session of the Assembly, held in Addis Ababa, on 30 and 31 January 2017, adopted the AU Master Roadmap of Practical Steps for Silencing the Guns in Africa by the Year 2020; the Tripoli Declaration on the Elimination of Conflicts in Africa and Promotion of Sustainable Peace, adopted on 31 August 2009, in which the AU Heads of State and Government reaffirmed their commitment to redouble efforts to promote sustainable peace, security and stability on the Continent;

3. **Also recalls** Decision [Assembly/AU/Dec. 645(XXIX)] on the inaugural Report of Council on the Implementation of the AU Master Roadmap of Practical Steps for Silencing the Guns in Africa by 2020, in which the Assembly declared the month of September each year, until 2020, as "Africa Amnesty Month" for the surrender and collection of illegally acquired and owned weapons/arms;

4. **Reiterates** that adherence to the principle of African ownership and priority-setting for the continent's peace and security agenda is critical for the successful promotion of lasting peace, security and stability in Africa, in line with Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM. (CLXXXIX)] adopted by Council at its 689th meeting held on 30 May 2017 on the AU Peace Fund and the Partnership Between the AU and the United Nations with Respect to Predictable Financing of AU Peace and

Security Activities. In this respect, Council, once again, **underscores the importance** of the decisions of the AU Assembly on the financing of the AU peace and security agenda, as part of the overall financing of the Union, including Decisions Assembly/AU/Dec561(XXIV) and Assembly/AU/Dec.577(XXV) adopted by

the 24th and 25th Ordinary Sessions of the Assembly of the Union, held in January and June 2015, in Addis Ababa and Johannesburg, respectively, by which the Member States agreed to contribute 25% of the AU peace and security efforts, including peace support operations, and Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.605(XXVII) on the financing of the Union adopted by the 27th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union held in July 2016 in Kigali, which decided to endow the AU Peace Fund with \$400m by 2020 with financing raised from AU Member States;

5. **Re-affirms the imperative** of upholding the principle of African Solutions to African Problems with regard to efforts aimed at preventing, managing and resolving conflicts and crises in Africa. In this regard, Council **reiterates its commitment**, in line with the relevant provisions of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, to the partnership with the United Nations (UN) on the basis of the primary responsibility of the UN Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security and the role of Regional Arrangements as provided for in Chapter VIII of the UN Charter;

6. **Notes with deep concern** the continued prevalence of threats to peace, security and stability of the Continent, which include, armed groups, terrorism, organized crime syndicates, illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons, epidemics, illegal migrations, human and drug trafficking, money laundering, as well as climate change related natural disasters such as droughts, floods and desertification;

7. **Reiterates** the commitment of the AU and its Member States, in collaboration with the Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (RECs/RMs) to fully own and lead the peace and security agenda of the Continent, by among others, fulfilling the commitment of meeting 25% of the AU's operational peace and security activities. In this regard, Council **commends** the A3 for their efforts and **stresses the need**, in line with AU Assembly decisions, for their continuous engagement within the Security Council with a view to upholding and further enhancing the AU Common Position with regard to securing predictable and sustainable financing for AU mandated/authorized peace support operations subsequently authorized by the UN Security Council;

8. **Expresses appreciation** to the AU Commission for the ongoing efforts to revitalize the AU Peace Fund. In particular, Council **expresses deep appreciation** to Dr. Donald Kaberuka, the AU High Representative for the Financing of the African Union and the Peace Fund, for his relentless efforts and **encourages** him to persevere. In the same context, Council **commends** all Member States, which have already made their contributions to the Peace Fund and **encourages** those Member States, which have not yet done so, to also do the same without any further delays.

Furthermore, Council **stresses the imperative** of continuous endowment of the Peace Fund as an expression of African ownership and leadership of the peace efforts in the Continent;

9. **Welcomes** the recent positive developments in the Horn of Africa marked by the improved diplomatic relations between and among the countries of the region, particularly between Eritrea and

Ethiopia, and the signing of the Joint Declaration on Comprehensive Cooperation between Ethiopia, Somalia and Eritrea in Asmara, on 5 September 2018, as well as the visit undertaken by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and other senior officials of these three countries to Djibouti, on 6 September 2018, as part of the efforts to normalize relations and promote good neighbourliness, enhance peace, security, stability and advance regional integration. In this context, Council **commends** the leaders of Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia for their steadfast efforts and commitment to promote the interests of their people and the region as a whole. In particular, Council **commends** the courageous and groundbreaking steps taken by H.E. Dr. Abiy Ahmed, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and H.E. Isaias Afwerki, President of the Republic of Eritrea towards ending the 20 years of conflict between their two sisterly countries, including the signing, on 8 July 2018, of an agreement that led to the full restoration of their diplomatic relations. Council **encourages** all stakeholders in Somalia to take advantage of the new regional dispensation in the Horn of Africa to safeguard the hard-won political and security gains that the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) presence helped to secure in the country since 2007. In this context, Council **requests** the Commission, working in close cooperation with the countries of the region, to take necessary steps with a view to supporting the new dispensation, towards promoting peace, security and development in the Horn of Africa;

10. Also welcomes the signing of the Final Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan during the 33rd Extra-Ordinary Inter-Governmental Authority on Development Assembly of Heads of State and Government, on 12 September 2018, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, which was preceded by the Khartoum round of the High Level Revitalization Forum between the Government of South Sudan and the opposition groups, as well as the face- to-face talks since June 2018, between H.E. President Salva Kiir Mayardit and Dr. Riek Machar Teny under the auspices of H.E. Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed of Ethiopia, H.E. President Omar Hassan Al Bashir of Sudan, H.E. President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda and H.E. President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya. Council **commends** the efforts of the leaders of the region and **strongly urges** all South Sudan political actors to commit to the full implementation of the Revitalized Agreement. Council **emphasizes** that these regional efforts demonstrate the efficacy of African solutions to African problems. In this context, Council **commends** the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and **reiterates** AU's commitment to continue to support its efforts aimed at promoting peace, security and stability in the entire Horn of Africa region;

11. Welcomes the efforts being deployed by the RECs/RMs in promoting peace, security and stability in the Continent. In this context, Council **commends** and **supports** the efforts being deployed by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in promoting peace, security and stability, as well as the consolidation of democracy in the SADC Member States. In this context, Council **welcomes** the successful organization and conduct of the harmonized elections in Zimbabwe, which were held on 30 July 2018 and **commends** the people and Government of the Republic of Zimbabwe for their commitment to continue deepening and consolidating democracy in the country. Council **also commends** the efforts being deployed by the Government of Zimbabwe to foster a new dispensation in the country, thereby opening up opportunities for the country's re-engagement with the members of the international community that had disengaged from Zimbabwe. In this respect, Council **calls on** all members of the international community that have imposed sanctions against Zimbabwe to lift the sanctions, without any further delay, in order to facilitate early socio-economic recovery in the country;

12. Takes note of the progress made to date, within the context of implementation of the Peace,

Security and Cooperation Framework Agreement for the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Region that was signed in Addis Ababa, on 24 February 2013, particularly, in the fight against armed groups and negative forces in the eastern part of the DRC, as well as the enhancement of confidence building measures among the countries of the region through specific mechanisms that include information sharing, the Joint Intelligence Fusion Centre, the Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism and the Joint Follow up Mechanism on the ADF in addition to other bilateral security cooperation arrangements. In this regard, Council **re-affirms** the crucial role of the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) embedded in MONUSCO in the operations against the negative forces and **stresses the need** for the UN to maintain the current FIB force strength, with a view to enabling it to effectively continue to discharge its mandate. In the same context, Council **welcomes** important steps being taken in the area of economic cooperation and integration, as well as enhanced ownership of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework by the signatory countries, as evidenced in the convening of the seventh and eighth Summits of the Regional Oversight Mechanism in Luanda (Angola) and Brazzaville (Republic of Congo), on 26 October 2016 and 19 October 2017, respectively. Council **also takes note** of the ongoing preparations for the upcoming elections to be held in the DRC in December 2018 and, in this context, **commends** President Joseph Kabila for his decision not to stand as a candidate for the December 2018 elections. In this respect, Council **urges** the DRC authorities and political actors to work together and create conducive conditions for the successful organization of peaceful, transparent and credible elections in line with the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, as well as the SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections, within the stipulated timelines;

13. Encourages the parties in Madagascar, with the financial and logistical support of the international community, to work towards peaceful, transparent and credible elections in the October 2018. Council **also urges** the authorities and all stakeholders in the Comoros to uphold the peace and stability gains secured through the Fomboni Agreement of 2001. Council **commends** the AU High Representative for Silencing the Guns, Former Minister Ramtane Lamamra of Algeria, for his tireless efforts aimed at assisting the stakeholders in the two countries in the process of finding lasting solutions to the present challenges facing them;

14. Expresses deep concern at the security and humanitarian situation in the Central African Republic (CAR) and the continued presence of armed groups in large parts of the country. Council **takes note** of the progress made by the Facilitation Panel of the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in the CAR and **urges** the Government to take, with due diligence, the necessary steps towards considering means and ways to address the claims submitted by the armed groups through the Facilitators. Council **stresses the need** for all parties in the CAR to work together with a view to building the required consensus to promote peace, security, healing, national reconciliation and justice in the CAR. In this regard, Council **reiterates** the centrality of the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in the CAR and **encourages** the countries of the region and the armed groups to fully support the Initiative;

15. Further, takes note of the relative stability prevailing in Burundi and requests the Commission to continue to engage the Government of Burundi with a view to expeditiously signing the Memorandum of Understanding for the deployment of the Military Experts and Human Rights Observers. Council **encourages** the Burundian stakeholders to preserve the gains achieved since the signing of the Arusha Agreement in 2000. In this context, Council, pending the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding,

decides to reduce the number of Human Rights Observers and Military Experts and to extend their mandate until further notice. Council **recalls** decision Assembly/AU /Dec.695(XXXI) adopted by the 31st Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government held from 1 to 2 July 2018 in Nouakchott, Mauritania, in which the Assembly requested the Commission to accompany Burundi during this phase and contribute, together with the East African Community, to its efforts towards an all-inclusive dialogue and the strengthening of democracy and respect for human rights in the country. Council **reiterates** the call by the Assembly for the lifting of sanctions imposed by the European Union on Burundi in order to create the opportunity for socio-economic recovery in the country;

16. Underscores the importance, within the context of promoting African solutions to African problems, to further enhance the cooperation between the AU and the RECs/RMs in promoting peace, security and stability on the Continent. In this regard, Council **underlines the importance** of genuine cooperation with the RECs/RMs and **stresses the urgent need** for Council to fully implement the Conclusions of the PSC Retreat on Enhancing its Cooperation with the RECs/RMs held from 14 to 17 September 2015, in Abuja, Nigeria. In this context, Council **looks forward** to its upcoming meeting with the RECs/RMs to be held in December 2018, which will offer the opportunity for further enhancing the working relations between the Council and the RECs/RMs in the area of promoting peace, security and stability in Africa, in line with Article 16 of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union;

17. Notes with deep concern the continued fighting between and among rival militia groups in Libya, which, in addition to the multiplication of initiatives, is undermining the ongoing efforts aimed at finding a political solution to the crisis in the country. In this regard, Council **urges** all Libyan political and military stakeholders to place national interests above all else, settle their differences through dialogue, and work together in addressing the challenges facing the country. Council **calls on** all Libyan parties to respond positively to the call by the AU, in cooperation with the UN, for the convening of a national reconciliation conference in Addis Ababa;

18. Takes note of the progress underway in Guinea Bissau, in the context of implementation of the October 2016 Conakry Agreement and the 2016 Bissau Roadmap, including the appointment of a consensual Prime Minister, formation of an inclusive government, the agreement on the date of 18 November 2018 for the legislative election; the appointment of President of the National Electoral Commission, reopening of the Assembly to function normally and approve the government plan. Council, noting the delays in the electoral process, **urges** all Bissau-Guinean political parties and other stakeholders to remain committed to the on-going peace process and to work together towards creating conducive conditions for the successful organization of credible and transparent elections, which are scheduled for 18 November 2018;

19. Congratulates President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita for his re-election as President of the Republic of Mali. Council **stresses the need** for the Government and all Malian parties to address the challenges facing the full implementation of the Algiers Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, signed in 2015. Council **re-affirms the importance** of the Nouakchott Process, in particular, within the context of the review and update of the AU Strategy for the Sahel Region and **welcomes** the upcoming ministerial meeting to be held in this framework, in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, in early November 2018. Council further **re-affirms the need** to mobilize all necessary support with a view to fully and sustainably

operationalizing the G-5 Sahel Joint Force, and once again, **calls on** the UN Security Council to take necessary steps expected from it to this end;

20. Reiterates the imperative need for the Continent, with the support of the AU partners, to continue exerting all necessary efforts to prevent relapses in countries emerging from conflicts and crisis situations. In this regard, Council **stresses the need** to expedite the implementation of Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.710 (XXXI) adopted at its 31st Ordinary Session held in Nouakchott, Mauritania, establishing the AU Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development Centre in Cairo, Egypt, and **welcomes** the offer by Egypt to host a workshop on the AU PCRD Framework in the Sahel region in October 2018;

21. Underscores the importance of using all available tools for conflict prevention, including preventive diplomacy, as well as addressing, in a holistic manner, all structural root causes of violent conflicts in Africa. In this context, Council **encourages** the other regions to emulate both, the Nouakchott Process and the Djibouti Process within the context of further enhancing their early warning and conflict prevention efforts;

22. Commends the AU partners for their continued support to the AU efforts to promote peace, security and stability on the Continent. Council **emphasizes the need** to ensure that the support from the AU partners for African solutions to African problems is aligned with the identified priorities on the ground and in a manner that complements the efforts of the AU;

23. Decides to remain seized of the matters.