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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL 800™ MEETING

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA 10 OCTOBER 2018

PSC/PR/COMM. 1 (DCCC)

COMMUNIQUE

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The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), at its 800th meeting, held on 10 October 2018, in Addis Ababa, considered the Report of its field mission to the Kingdom of Lesotho that was undertaken from 26 to 30 August 2018 and adopted the following decision:

Council,

1. **Takes note** of the report of its field mission to the Kingdom of Lesotho, which was undertaken from 26 to 30 August 2018;
2. **Recalls** its previous decisions on the situation in the Kingdom of Lesotho, in particular Communique PSC/PR/COMM. (DCCXLVI11) adopted at its 748th meeting held on 24 January 2018, authorizing the deployment of the SADC Prevention Mission to Lesotho (SAPMIL) and Communique PSC/MIN/COMM.(DCCXCVII) adopted at its 797th meeting held at ministerial level on 24 September 2018.
3. **Takes note** of the efforts being deployed by the Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho in implementing the reforms recommended by the SADC Commission of Inquiry and the SADC Summit, particularly the successful convening of the National Leaders Forum, from 23 to 24 August 2018, which was an important milestone and a necessary confidence building process that should facilitate the next steps required for the successful implementation of the much needed reforms. In this regard, Council **emphasizes the need** for the Basotho people to organize a genuine, all-inclusive and transparent National Dialogue and, to this end, **encourages** all key political actors who are still in exile to take advantage of the security assurances by the Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho, and urgently return home to positively contribute towards ensuring the success of the reforms process;
4. **Underlines** the importance for all people of the Kingdom of Lesotho to set aside their differences and personal, as well as group interest, and uphold the national interests above all else, and work together towards promoting national healing and reconciliation. Council **encourages** all Basotho nationals in the diaspora and those in exile to positively consider the gesture by the Government and consider returning home in order to be part of the reforms process and to also contribute towards its success;
5. **Commends** the new command of the defence and security services of the Kingdom of Lesotho for the commitment to ensure the successful implementation of security sector reforms and **encourages** the defence and security services to remain professional, apolitical, respect the country's constitution and to submit to civilian authority;
6. **Also commends** the faith-based organisations, community leaders, civil society organizations and the media for their positive role in the current efforts to address the present political and security challenges facing the country and **urges** them to continue to promote and raise public awareness on the importance of unity, national reconciliation and successful implementation of the next steps required to expedite the reforms process;

7. **Further commends** the SADC Facilitator, President Cyril Ramaphosa of the Republic of South Africa, and his entire facilitation team led by former South African Deputy Chief Justice, Dikgang Moseneke, for their relentless efforts in Lesotho, particularly for the successful convening of the National Leaders Forum. Council **encourages** the facilitation team to persevere and remain actively engaged until the restoration of political and security stability in Lesotho;

8. **Expresses gratitude** to the bilateral and multilateral development partners of the Kingdom of Lesotho, particularly, the European Union, the United Nations and the Republic of South Africa, for their continued support to the efforts being deployed by the Kingdom of Lesotho to find lasting solutions to the present challenges facing that country;

9. **Commends** the AU Commission for its sustained support to the efforts being deployed by SADC, including through the mobilization of required financial resources, which significantly enhance the capacity of SAPMIL to more effectively discharge its mandate.

10. **Also takes note** of the challenges facing the Kingdom of Lesotho, particularly in the country's Judiciary system, which has huge backlog of cases resulting in delays in the delivery of justice. In this respect, Council **requests** the Commission to support the Kingdom of Lesotho in the search for the foreign judges to handle the current backlog of cases before the country's courts of law, particularly those cases relating to high profile personalities. In the same context, Council **commends** the EU and the Republic of Namibia for having responded positively to the request made by the Kingdom of Lesotho for foreign judges. Council **encourages** all other Member States, with similar justice systems, and who are in a position to do so, to also assist the Kingdom of Lesotho with judges, in the spirit of pan-African solidarity.

11. **Stresses the need** for the relevant Lesotho authorities to do everything possible to find and secure the weapons missing from the arsenals. In this regard, Council **also encourages** the people of Lesotho who might still be in illegal possession of arms to take advantage of the Africa Amnesty month and voluntarily surrender them to the relevant authorities for safe keeping;

12. **Expresses concern** over the delays in the implementation of the reforms process and, in this regard, **endorses** the decision adopted by the 30th SADC Summit held on 17 and 18 August 2018, not to entertain any further delays in the implementation of the reforms and the national dialogue;

13. **Commends** SADC for its relentless efforts in Lesotho. In particular, Council **commends** the SADC Preventive Mission in Lesotho (SAPMIL), for all the efforts being deployed in fulfilment of its mandate and **encourages** the Mission to persevere until the full restoration of political and security stability in Lesotho;

14. **Notes with appreciation**, the successful rapid deployment of the SADC Standby Brigade, under Scenario 4 of the African Standby Force (ASF). In this context, Council **emphasizes** that the successful deployment of SAPMIL within the framework of ASF should be emulated by the other ASF regional standby arrangements;

15. **Expresses** gratitude to the Government and people of the Kingdom of Lesotho for the hospitality accorded to the PSC Delegation during the field mission. Council **also expresses** gratitude to the SADC Secretariat and SAPMIL for their support which facilitated the successful undertaking of the PSC field mission;
16. **Reiterates** the commitment of the AU to support SADC and accompany the Kingdom of Lesotho until the political and security situations in that country are fully restored. In this context, Council **looks forward** to the decision of the next SADC Summit with regard to the future of SAPMIL and **re-affirms** the commitment of the AU to continue to support SADC efforts in mobilizing the additional resources that may be required for the Mission;
17. **Adopts** the report of its field mission to the Kingdom of Lesotho undertaken during the period, from 26 to 30 August 2018, with its recommendations; and
18. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.