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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL 838<sup>TH</sup> MEETING  
9 APRIL 2019 ADDIS ABABA

PSC/PR/COMM. (DCCCXXXVIII)

COMMUNIQUE

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**Adopted by the Peace and Security Council at its 838<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 9 April 2019 on countering terrorism and violent extremism in the Lake Chad and the Sahel regions: Strengthening AU support to the MNJTF and G5 Sahel Joint Force; and consideration of the renewal of the G5 Sahel Joint Force mandate,**

The Peace and Security Council,

**Recalling** Article 7 of its Protocol and its previous communiqués and press statements on countering terrorism and violent extremism in the Lake Chad and the Sahel regions: Strengthening AU support to the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF) and G5 Sahel Joint Force; and consideration of the renewal of the G5 Sahel Joint Force mandate, including communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCLIX)] and communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.(DCLXXIX)] adopted at its 759<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 23 March 2018, and at its 679<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 13 April 2017, respectively;

**Further recalling** the communiqué issued by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Authority on 22 December 2018, as well as the Joint Declaration adopted by the Joint Summit between the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and ECOWAS, held on 30 July 2018, in Lomé, Togo;

**Noting** the opening remarks by the Permanent Representative of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to the African Union, H.E. Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, in his capacity as the PSC Chairperson for the month of April 2019, and the presentation made by the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, H.E. Ambassador Smail Chergui;

**Taking note** of the Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the Operationalization of the G-5 Sahel Joint Task Force, as well as of: the presentations made by the Permanent Secretary of the G5 Sahel, H.E. Ambassador Maman Sidikou, the Force Commander of the G-5 Sahel Joint Task Force, the statements by the representative of the Lake Chad Basin Commission, and the Director of the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT);

**Further noting** the statements made by the representatives of the Member States of the G-5 Sahel, namely, Burkina Faso, as the Chairperson of the G-5 Sahel, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger; as well as the statements made by the representatives of South Africa and Côte d'Ivoire, as Members of the United Nations Security Council (A3), the ECCAS, the ECOWAS, the United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU);

**Recalling** the relevant provisions of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, in particular, Article 16, and the 2008 Memorandum of Understanding between the AU and Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (RECs/RMs), as well as the respective Memoranda of Understanding signed by the AU Commission with the Executive Secretariat of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC), and the G5-Sahel Permanent Secretariat, with regard to the AU support to their regional efforts against terrorism and violent extremism;

Acting under Article 7 of its Protocol, the Peace and Security Council,

1. **Expresses deep concern** over the continuing fragility of the security situation in the Sahel region in

general, particularly the continuous terrorist attacks in Northern and Central Mali, in Burkina Faso, as well as in the border region between Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, threatening the whole sahel -saharan region, including its southern borders ;

2. **Conveys its deep concern** over the security and humanitarian situation in the Lake Chad basin which is deteriorating due to the effect of climate change and the threat posing by the Boko Haram terrorist group;

3. **Expresses its deep sympathy** for all lives lost in the Sahel region and the Lake Chad Basin, particularly the recent attacks in Ouagassou-Peul, in Mali, and in Arbinda, Burkina Faso;

4. **Strongly condemns** all attacks by armed, terrorist and criminal groups against civilians, and **warns** the perpetrators of these heinous crimes that they will be held accountable and brought to justice;

5. **Deploras, with deep concern**, the recent rise in incidences of inter-communal violence and hate speech, as well as hate crimes and **urges** the authorities of the affected countries to urgently take necessary measures to prevent these scourges and ensure that the perpetrators are severely punished under the law;

6. **Reiterates** the need to address, in a holistic approach, the fundamental root causes and drivers of terrorism, including marginalization and exclusion, while also **underlines once more** the need to effectively complement the ongoing military efforts, the G-5 Sahel Joint Task Force and the MNJTF through economic and social actions and ensure that the support being provided goes beyond mere provision of humanitarian aid to providing long-term stabilization and development to the affected areas of the Sahel region and the Lake Chad Basin. Furthermore, Council **underscores the importance** of exchanging experiences and good practices among African countries, with regard to efforts aimed at countering extremist speech that lead to terrorism ;

7. **Welcomes** the progress made in the implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali of 2015 emanating from the Algiers Process and **urges, once more**, the signatories to redouble their efforts and expedite the implementation of the Agreement within the prescribed timelines, in the framework of the "*Pacte pour la paix au Mali*";

8. **Pays tribute to** the countries of the G-5 Sahel for the efforts deployed towards the operationalization of the G-5 Joint Task Force and the countries of the Lake Chad Basin in a very challenging environment. Specifically, Council **welcomes** the progress made by the MNJTF in the fight against Boko Haram, creating safe and secure environment in areas affected by terrorism, and the progress made by the G-5 Joint Task Force, in the conduct of operations in the central and eastern spindles at the beginning of the current year;

9. **Stresses the need** to redouble support extended to the activities of the MNJTF and the G- 5 Joint Task Force through provision of necessary equipment for the Forces to be fully and actively operational in order to effectively address the security threat posed by the terrorist groups in the Sahel and Lake Chad basin regions;

10. **Emphasizes the need** for sustainable and predictable financial and logistical support to the efforts of Member States in the two regions in combating the scourges of terrorism and organized crime;
11. **Underlines the need** for a comprehensive and rapid implementation of the Regional Strategy for the Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience of the Boko Haram-affected areas, with the support of the international community, on the basis of the commitment demonstrated by the countries of the region, including at the extraordinary summit of the Lake Chad Basin countries held in N'djamena, on 29 November 2018;
12. **Expresses its sincere gratitude** to the bilateral and multilateral partners for their continued support to the Member States of the Sahel-Saharan region facing the combined threats of terrorism and violent extremism, as well as organized crime. In the same context, Council **welcomes** the announcement made at the G5 Sahel Partners and Donors Coordination Conference regarding the financing of the Priority Investment Program (PIP) of 6 December 2018 in Nouakchott, Mauritania and **encourages** all those who made pledges to fulfil them, as soon as possible;
13. **Underscores** the importance of cooperation and collaboration among member states in the fight against terrorism in the Continent. Therefore, **encourages** all AU Member States to promote trans-border cooperation in the fight against terrorism, as well as promoting regional economic development with a view to alleviate the living conditions in the regions;
14. **Reaffirms the importance** of increasing state capacity to enhance resilience in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism, as well as the need to utilize the AU strategies and institutional mechanisms in addressing the threat of terrorism and the impact of climate change in the Continent. In this regard, Council **welcomes** the holding in Niamey, Niger, on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2019, of the First Conference of Heads of State and Government of the Sahel region on Climate Change, and **calls on** the AU and its Member States, as well the International community as a whole, to support this initiative as part of African responses to threats to peace and security relating to climate change in the Sahel;
15. **Requests** the Commission to develop a credible framework for the effective prevention and management, as well as resolution of local conflicts, including inter-communal violence, transhumance, and land disputes, in collaboration with other relevant organizations and mechanisms. In this context, Council **welcomes** the organization of a ministerial conference on intercommunal violence, while also **reiterates the need** for the Commission to expedite the operationalization of the AU Humanitarian Agency;
16. **Reaffirms** its full support to the stabilization efforts being deployed by the United Nations Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), and **pays tribute** to the troop-contributing countries for their contributions to the restoration of peace and security throughout Mali. In this context, Council **welcomes** the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 2423 (2018) requesting the UN Secretary-General to review the technicalities of the collaboration between MINUSMA, Member States of the G5 Sahel, especially as it relates to intelligence sharing. Council **underlines the need** for the UN Security Council to extend the support of MINUSMA beyond the limits of the Malian territory to all other components of the G5 Sahel Joint Task Force;
17. **Further reaffirms the importance** of the Nouakchott Process for the Enhancement of the Security

Cooperation and the Operationalization of the African Peace and Security Architecture in the Sahelo-Saharan region, as an AU inclusive framework for the promotion of peace and security in the region. In this regard, Council **welcomes** the reactivation of the Nouakchott Process, with the holding of its 5<sup>th</sup> ministerial meeting on 28 November 2018, in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, and **once again, underlines the importance** of greater coordination of initiatives and actions aimed at promoting peace, security and stability in the Sahelo-Saharan region, bearing in mind that in the context of the fight against terrorism and violent extremism, there is no alternative to collective/coordinated action;

18. **Agrees on the need** for Council to also undertake a field mission to the G-5 Sahel region, as soon as possible, in order to have first-hand appreciation of the realities on the ground, as well as efforts being deployed by the G5 Sahel;

19. **Decides** to extend the deployment of the G5 Sahel Joint Force for a period of twelve (12) months, from 12 April 2019 to 12 April 2020;

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