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P. O. Box 3243, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia Tel.: (251-11) 551 38 22 Fax: (251-11) 519321

Email: [situationroom@africa-union.org](mailto:situationroom@africa-union.org)

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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL

869TH MEETING

19 AUGUST 2019

ADDIS- ABABA

PSC/PR/COMM. (DCCCLXIX)

COMMUNIQUE

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**Adopted by the Peace and Security Council during its 869th meeting held on 19 August 2019 on Elections in Africa for the period January to December 2019,**

The Peace and Security Council.

**Noting** the opening statement made by H.E. Ambassador Albert Ranganai Chimbindi, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Zimbabwe to the African Union and Chairperson of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) for August 2019 and the Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on Elections in Africa for the Period January to December 2019, that was presented by the AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, H.E. Ambassador, Minata Samate Cessouma, for the following Member States, namely: Benin, Comoros, Guinea Bissau, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritania, Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa, as well as on the constitutional referendum in Egypt; and on upcoming elections in Algeria, Botswana, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia and Tunisia.

**Also noting** the statements made by the representatives of Algeria, Benin, Comoros, Egypt, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritania, Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa;

**Recalling** its previous communiqués on elections in Africa, particularly Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM. (DCCCXV)], adopted at its 815<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 04 December 2018;

**Also recalling** the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance and the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council and other relevant AU instruments;

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

1. **Congratulates** all Member States which have successfully conducted peaceful elections and referendum during the first and second quarters of the year, **encourages** those which are scheduled to conduct elections in 2019 to emulate the best practices observed in other Member States, and **encourages** the importance of using the reports of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) to draw lessons and share best practices from countries that have successfully conducted elections;
2. **Underscores the importance** of African leadership, ownership and control of elections and, in this respect, **encourages** Member States to mobilise financial resources from within the Continent to support the electoral processes and enhance technical capacity of the Election Management Bodies (EMBs);
3. **Stresses the need** for AU Member States to be proactive, and to use all available instruments for preventive diplomacy to address issues that can negatively affect the successful organisation of elections in Africa, including the reports of electoral calendars, as well as external interference after elections;
4. **Reiterates the importance** of inclusiveness and enhanced citizen participation in all democratic processes in the Continent and, in this context, **encourages** Member States to create conducive conditions for effective participation of women, youth, vulnerable groups and people living with disabilities, in elections in Africa; further **encourages** the AU Commission to have full transparency in the selection of the AU Observation Mission teams;

5. **Underlines the need for** burden sharing in election observations, in Member States, on a case by case basis, between the AU and the Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (RECs/RMs) involved, and based on comparative advantages;
6. **Notes, with concern,** the delays in the finalisation of reports of AU Election Observation Missions and, in this regard, **requests** the Chairperson of the Commission to always ensure that the reports of AU Election Observation Missions are timeously finalised in order to preserve their importance and relevance; in the same context, **notes** the need to standardize the compilation of the AU Observation Mission reporting;
7. **Further underscores the importance** for early planning and budgeting for the AU Election Observation Missions, as well as to ensure mobilisation of necessary resources for the deployment of sufficient numbers of election observers cognisant of the fact that elections are a process and not an event;
8. **Reiterates** the call for all political actors, particularly political parties, to make full use of all available legal instruments for peacefully addressing election related disputes; and **condemns** any resort of violence in that regard;
9. **Also underlines the need** for further strengthening the institutional capacity of national Election Management Bodies and, in this regard, **commends** the AU Commission for the continued demand driven capacity building support being extended to Member States, which is one of the key success factors in ensuring the successful organisation of elections;
10. **Commends** all Member States, which have already signed, ratified and domesticated the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, and **encourages** those which have not yet done so, to also do the same without further delays;
11. **Reiterates the importance** for the Commission to regularly brief Council, on elections in Africa, on a quarterly basis; and
12. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.