

**AFRICAN UNION**

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**PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL 920™ MEETING**

**21 APRIL 2020**

**ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**

**PSC/PR/COMM.(CMXX)**

## COMMUNIQUE

**Adopted by the Peace and Security Council at its 920<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 21 April 2020 on the consideration of the renewal of the mandate of the G5 Sahel Joint Force and the draft Strategic Concept Note on planning for the deployment of 3000 strong force to counter terrorism and violent extremism in the Sahel region,**

The Peace and Security Council,

**Noting** the opening remarks by Ambassador Catherine Muigai Mwangi, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kenya and Chairperson of the PSC for April 2020 and the briefings made by Ambassador Smail Chergui, Commissioner for Peace and Security and the Representative of the Republic of Mauritania on behalf of the Executive Secretary of the G5 Sahel; **also noting** the statements made by the Member States of the G5 Sahel, namely, Niger, Burkina Faso and Mali;

**Recalling** Articles 6 and 7 of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union and its previous communiqués and press statements on the activities of the G5 Sahel Joint Force, including communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCLIX), communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.(DCLXXIX)] and PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCCXXXVIII), adopted at its 759<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 23 March 2018, 679<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 13 April 2017 and 838<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 9 April 2019, respectively;

**Also recalling** the decision [Assembly/AU/Dec.792(XXXIII)] on the situation in Libya and Sahel, adopted by the 33<sup>rd</sup> Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union, held from 9 to 10 February 2020, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, relating to the possible deployment, within the relevant provisions of the PSC Protocol related to the African Standby Force (ASF), of a force composed of the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF) and 3000 troops for six months in order to further degrade terrorist groups in the Sahel; and

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 continuation of terrorist attacks in Northern and Central Mali, in Burkina Faso, as well as in the border region between Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger; **condemns, in strongest terms possible**, all attacks by terrorist, armed and criminal groups against civilians and security institutions of the countries of the region, as well as the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and other international forces;
  
2. **Commends** the efforts deployed by the G5 Sahel Joint Force in degrading the fighting capacity of the terrorist, armed and criminal groups operating in the Sahel, which contributes to the promotion of peace, security and stability in the region; **also commends** the progress made in the conduct of operations in the Liptako Gurma area and **reiterates** its appeal for AU Member States, as well as partners to complement and provide the necessary support to the Joint Force, through provision of necessary equipment in order to enable it to defeat the terrorist groups operating in the Sahel region;

3. **Welcomes** the efforts of the AU Commission in convening, on 16 March 2020, in Niamey, Niger, the High Level Consultative Meeting with the ECOWAS and G5 Sahel Executive Secretariat, which, among others, discussed the issues relating to the implementation of AU Assembly Decision 792, particularly the development of guidelines to facilitate the implementation of the Decision;
4. **Also welcomes** the Draft Strategic Concept Note on Planning Guidance for the Deployment of 3000 troops to the Sahel developed by the AU Commission and other concerned stakeholders, which provides a solid basis for further consultations, in the coming weeks, among the key stakeholders, namely, Ministries of Defence of the G-5 Sahel countries and ECOWAS, as well as the PSC Military Staff Committee, in order to put together all elements necessary for expediting the implementation of Assembly Decision 792. To this end, Council **looks forward** to receiving a comprehensive briefing on the security situation in the Sahel and to consider the revised Draft Strategic Concept Note on Planning Guidance for the Deployment of 3000 troops, not later than 15 June 2020;
5. **Reiterates the need** to holistically address the fundamental root causes and drivers of terrorism in the Sahel, particularly issues of political inclusion, equitable development, eradicating poverty, youth employment creation, containing desertification, diversity management, including promoting religious tolerance, as well as other socio-economic needs of the population;
6. **Underscores the importance** of sharing intelligence and experiences, as well as joint operations, where necessary, in combating terrorism and violent extremism in the Sahel and in the other parts of the Continent affected by terrorism;
7. **Requests** the Commission to scale up the use of all African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) frameworks and available tools, particularly the Nouakchott Process, the African Centre for Study and Research on Terrorism (ACRST), the African Police Cooperation Mechanism (AFRIPOL) and the Committee of Intelligence and Security Services in Africa (CISSA);
8. **Decides**, in the interim, to authorize the roll-over of the mandate of the G5 Sahel Joint Force for a period of three (3) months, starting from 13 April 2020; and
9. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.