

**DECISION ON THE THEME OF THE YEAR 2019 AND
HUMANITARIAN SITUATION IN AFRICA
Doc. EX.CL/1189(XXXVI)**

The Executive Council,

1. **APPRECIATES** the efforts of the AU Leader for the Theme of the Year 2019, H. E. Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, President of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, towards achieving durable solutions to forced displacement in Africa, and highly appreciates his engagement in steering the planned activities and expressing solidarity to forcibly displaced persons and host communities;
2. **EXPRESSES** its appreciation to Member States hosting refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons and calls for renewed efforts to implement African solutions in resolving African humanitarian crises on the continent and **ENCOURAGES** them to continue this gesture of solidarity in the spirit of Pan-Africanism;
3. **APPRECIATES** the timely support from Member States to those affected by humanitarian crises and **CALLS** for strengthening of such cooperation and solidarity in future humanitarian crises;
4. **TAKES NOTE** of the outcomes and results of the various activities carried out by the Commission and AU Organs, Member States, Regional Economic Communities, Civil Society and partners, in particular the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), within the framework of the 2019 Theme of the year roadmap “Project 2019 Implementation Roadmap Matrix”;
5. **RECALLS** Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.718(XXXII) on the Report of the Peace and Security Council on its activities and the State of Peace and Security in Africa. **APPRECIATES** the efforts of Member States hosting large numbers of refugees and **WELCOMES** their efforts in addressing this issue in close cooperation with the international community;
6. **EMPHASISES** the importance of addressing root causes and achieving durable solutions to forced displacement in Africa in line with relevant African Union legal and policy frameworks and **IMPLORES** Member States, humanitarian and development partners, as well as frontline responders, to scale up response beyond emergency relief;
7. **NOTES WITH GREAT CONCERN** the growing challenges of the humanitarian situation in Africa exacerbated by growing impacts of climate change and in some instances in spite of positive developments across the continent, driven by conflicts, terrorism, political instability, and **URGES** Member States to address these structural root causes of forced displacement, by strengthening and developing early warning and early response systems;
8. **REITERATES** the importance of the AU Convention for the Protection and

Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa, welcomes its ratification in 2019 by Equatorial Guinea, Somalia and South Sudan, **CALLS ON** the 15 Member States that have not signed and 26 that have not yet ratified/acceded to the Convention to do so. **ALSO CALLS ON** the 12 Member States that have not signed and 9 that have not ratified/acceded to the 1969 OAU Convention to do so. Member States are also called upon to domesticate and implement the 1969 OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa and the 2009 AU Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa;

9. **UNDERScores** the importance of effective international responsibility-sharing mechanisms in order to achieve and ensure the availability of adequate, flexible and predictable resources to help address the enormous challenges posed by forced displacement and humanitarian crises in Africa;
10. **NOTES WITH CONCERN** the impact of sanctions in worsening the socio-economic conditions in countries that are already experiencing dire humanitarian situations;
11. **DECIDES to:**
 - A. **On Implementation of Outcomes of the Theme of the Year and Role of the AU Leader for the 2019 Theme**
 - i. **APPEAL** to the AU Leader of the 2019 Theme of the Year, H.E. Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, President of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea to continue supporting efforts of the AU in addressing challenges of forced displacement;
 - ii. **UNDERTAKE** measures to address specific longstanding protracted situations of forced displacement in the continent;
 - iii. **CALLS ON** the Commission to work closely with AU Organs especially Department of Peace and Security, African Union Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (AUPCRD), UN Partners, Humanitarian and Development Partners to reflect and ensure sustainable post conflict reconstruction and development of war-ravaged areas for sustainable voluntary return, resettlement and reintegration of refugees, IDPs and other victims of armed conflicts;
 - iv. **ALSO CALLS ON** the Commission to work closely with the AU Leader of the 2019 Theme of the Year in convening a Continental Conference on humanitarian issues to further discuss strategies for addressing root causes and durable solutions to forced displacement in Africa;
 - v. **RECALLS** Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.604(XXVI) of 30 January 2016, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and **NOTES** the urgent need for the establishment of the African Humanitarian Agency, and **CALLS** on the Commission to

expedite processes and consultations on modalities for the operationalization of the African Humanitarian Agency in 2020.

B. On Root Causes of Forced Displacement in Africa

- i. **IMPLEMENT** pledges and recommendations that have been made in the context of the activities of the 2019 Theme of the Year by establishing stronger linkages with the 2020 theme of the year on *“Silencing the Guns: Creating Conducive Conditions for Africa’s Development”*;
- ii. **REDOUBLE** efforts towards inculcating a culture of human rights, justice, constitutionalism and the rule of law;
- iii. **PUT** in place mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of election-related violent conflicts;
- iv. **STRENGTHEN and/or ESTABLISH** national infrastructures for peace with a view to ensure reconciliation, social harmony and cohesion in the process of nation-building;
- v. **TACKLE** challenges that breed such social ills such as poverty, inequality, unemployment, exclusion and marginalisation;
- vi. **ADDRESS** the specific needs of social groups in vulnerable situations such as women, children, youth, persons with disabilities and older persons and ensure their full and effective participation;

C. On Early Warning and Prevention:

- i. **UNDERTAKE** measures to strengthen their national systems on disaster related displacement, disaster risk and reduction and early warning in line with the Sendai Framework, the African Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Programme of Action for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for the Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in Africa;
- ii. **PUT IN PLACE** sustainable mechanisms aimed at mitigating the adverse effects of environmental degradation, extreme weather patterns and climate change;
- iii. **ENSURE** that early warning mechanisms of the AU, RECs and Member States include early signs of disasters to facilitate early response and recovery.

D. On Durable Solutions:

- i. **MANDATES** the AU Commission, upon request by Member States, to contribute to coordination efforts and enabling internally displaced persons and refugees to make a free and informed choice between return, local integration and resettlement, in conformity with relevant African and

International legal instruments;

- ii. **URGES** the Member States, RECs, AU Commission to ensure that policies, strategies and mechanisms for addressing forced displacement reinforce the inextricable nexus between and among governance, peace, post-conflict reconstruction and recovery, development and climate change.

E. On Partnerships and International Cooperation

- i. **CALLS ON** the Commission to undertake measures to strengthen partnerships with RECs, Member States and other non-state actors in its response to forced displacement in the continent;
 - ii. **URGES** the Member States, RECs, and the AU Commission and Partners to ensure the availability of adequate, flexible and predictable resources to help address the enormous challenges posed by forced displacement and humanitarian crises in Africa and **FACILITATE** multi-year, flexible funding that transcends the emergency relief with a view to address the humanitarian-development nexus;
 - iii. **CALLS UPON** the Commission to explore opportunities for mobilization of resources from non-traditional donors and the private sector in Africa and beyond;
 - iv. **CALLS FOR** the immediate lifting of international sanctions on African countries to ameliorate the adverse effects of humanitarian crises;
 - v. **URGES** the Commission to consult and engage with AU Member States whose citizens are slated for relocation to third countries through the processes in which the AU Commission is party.
- 12. REQUESTS** the Commission, to support Member States in their efforts in addressing humanitarian challenges;
- 13. ALSO REQUESTS** the Commission to report regularly on progress in the implementation of this decision.