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UNIÃO AFRICANA

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, P.O. Box: 3243 Tel.: (251-11) 5513 822 Fax: (251-11) 5519 321
Email: situationroom@africa-union.org

PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
821ST MEETING
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA
9 JANUARY 2019

PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCCXXI)

COMMUNIQUE

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The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), at its 821st meeting, held in Addis Ababa, on 9 January 2019, adopted the following decision on the harmonization of the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises (ACIRC) within the African Standby Force (ASF) Framework.

Council,

1. **Takes note** of the statement made by H.E Crisantos Obama Ondo, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea and Chair of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) for the month of January 2019, as well as the introductory remarks made by Colonel Louis Roland Massoukou, Defence Advisor of the Republic of Congo in his capacity as Chair of the Military Staff Committee (MSC) of the PSC during the month of October and Chair of the 12th and 13th meeting of the MSC held on 5 October 2018 and 8 January 2019 respectively, on the harmonization of the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crisis (ACIRC) within the African Standby Force (ASF) Framework. Council **also takes note** of the briefing made by Colonel Kennedy Okoro, Defence Advisor of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, in his capacity as Rapporteur of the 12th and 13th meeting of the MSC held on 5 October 2018 and 8 January 2019 respectively;

2. **Recalls** its previous communiqués and pronouncements on the ASF and the ACIRC, particularly, Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCXCV) adopted by the PSC at its 795th meeting held on 20 September 2018; Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCLXVII)] adopted at its 767th meeting held on 25 April 2018; Press Statement [PSC/PR/BR.(DCLVII)] adopted at its 657th meeting held on 9 February 2017 and Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM. (DCCV)] adopted at its 705th Meeting held on 25 April 2017.

3. **Commends** the Commission and the MSC of the PSC for facilitating the conduct of the 12th and 13th meeting of the MSC of the PSC held on 5 October 2018 and 8 January 2019, respectively, pursuant to Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCXCV) adopted by the PSC at its 795th meeting held on 20 September 2018, which emphasized, once again, the need for the Commission to expedite the process of harmonization of ACIRC within the ASF, in full compliance with the letter and spirit of Assembly Decisions 679 and 695 and directed the MSC to make appropriate recommendations, including timelines and roadmap, to guide the PSC on how to overcome the challenges facing the harmonization of the ACIRC within the ASF;

4. **Takes note** of the outcomes of the 12th and 13th meetings of the MSC of the PSC and **agrees** that the term 'harmonization', in the context of Assembly Decisions 679 and 695, means that ACIRC should be integrated within the ASF Framework. In this regard, Council **decides** to adopt the recommended roadmap and time lines and thus directs the Commission, working closely with the MSC, as follows:

- a. The AU Commission should send letters of appreciation, not later than end of January 2019, to all ACIRC Volunteer Countries/Nations for all their contributions to the promotion of peace, security on the Continent, and also encourage them

- to find ways and means aimed at availing their assets to their respective RECs/RMs;
- b. The Commission, through the Office of the AU Legal Counsel, should review all existing legal frameworks between the AU and the ACIRC Volunteer Nations and submit a report to the PSC, by March 2019;
 - c. The Commission should revitalize the ASF Structure within the Peace and Security Department, by 31 May 2019, with appropriate staffing and proper job descriptions;
 - d. The Commission should convene a coordination meeting, not later than the end of June 2019, between the Commission, ASF and ACIRC Planning Cells, as well as the Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (RECs/RMs), on the implementation of Assembly Decisions 679 and 695, as well as relevant PSC Communiqués;
 - e. The Commission should notify all AU international partners and organizations, by June 2019, on the integration of ACIRC within the ASF;
 - f. The Commission should Report to the 32nd Ordinary Session of the Assembly in February 2020 on the completion of the harmonization of ACIRC within the ASF.
5. **Expresses its appreciation** to the Volunteering Nations of ACIRC for establishing this temporary mechanism, in line with Assembly Decision 489(XXI), as a transitional arrangement, pending the operationalization of the ASF and its Rapid Deployment Capability (RDC);
6. **Requests** the MSC to develop a matrix with a timetable, as well as implementation and monitoring responsibility for the Roadmap. In this regard, Council **agrees** that in coordination with the Commission, the Chairs of the PSC for the months of January to July 2019 should provide updates on progress made during the course of their chairship of the PSC on the harmonization of the ACIRC within the ASF Framework, in line with this Communiqué.
7. **Decides** to remain actively seized of this matter.