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PRESS RELEASE

AU Peace and Security Council Concludes a Four-Day Field Mission to the Republic of South Sudan

Juba, 8 March 2019: In line with its mandate to promote and enhance peace and security in the continent, the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC) undertook a field mission to the Republic of South Sudan from 5 to 8 March 2019. The mission took place in the framework of the implementation of various decisions of the Council on the situation in South Sudan. In particular, the Council aimed at following up on the implementation status of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS) signed on 12 September 2019, as well as expressing solidarity with the people of South Sudan. In this light, it is worth noting that this is the third field mission of the AUPSC since October 2016. Indeed, this mission also complements the visits of the AU High Level Ad Hoc Committee on South Sudan (AUHLCSS - AU-C5), and the AU Inter-departmental Taskforce on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development undertaken in late 2018.

The PSC delegation comprising representatives of the fifteen Member States namely: Congo, Ambassador Lazare Makayat Safouesse; Egypt, Ambassador Osama Mahmoud Abdelkhalik; Kenya, Ambassador Catherine Muigai Mwangi; Nigeria, Ambassador Bankole Adeoye and Zimbabwe, ambassador Albert R. Chimbindi, as well as Angola, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Liberia, Morocco, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Togo and Zambia. The PSC delegation was led by Her Excellency, Catherine Muigai Mwangi, Ambassador/Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kenya to the African Union, who is the Chairperson of the PSC for the month of March 2019. During the mission, the delegation held consultations with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Honourable Nhial Deng Nhial, Members of the National Pre-Transitional Committee, Members of the Steering Committee of the National Dialogue, the Special Representation of the Secretary General of the United Nations (UN), Head of the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), as well as the Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (R-JMEC) and the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring Mechanism (CTSAMM). The delegation also met with the African Diplomatic Corps, the international partners and representatives of the civil society organizations in Juba. During its visit to Yei River State, which has recently witnessed pockets of increased insecurity/or conflict, the PSC delegation met with the traditional leaders, youth, women and leaders of faith-based organizations, as well as the representatives of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) from the Atende IDP Camp. The delegation also participated and delivered a statement at the 4th R-JMEC plenary session, which took place on 7 March 2019, in Juba.

In all its meetings, the delegation expressed the solidarity and total support of the African Union towards the fully implementation of the R-ARCSS in finding lasting peace in South Sudan, and also strongly urged all parties to the conflict to uphold their commitments to the implementation of the

Revitalized Agreement by making necessary sacrifices, allow for genuine participation with a view of rebuilding a peaceful South Sudan and create conditions for development activities. In this respect, the PSC delegation called upon all armed groups and movements that have not yet done so, to sign and adhere to the R-ARCSS without further delay.

In light of the foregoing, the PSC, in its interactions with all stakeholders, reconfirmed the readiness of the AU to spare no efforts in supporting the accelerated implementation of the R-ARCSS. The PSC noted in its remarks to the R-JMEC that South Sudan holds promise for a safer and secure region and consequently where South Sudan goes, this region will follow. It is therefore imperative that the international community remains resolute in the pursuit for peace, stability and development in South Sudan. The PSC further noted that there have been concerns over the manner in which the Revitalized Agreement was reached and suggestions on how to better make it hold. In this light, it underscored that mutually agreed approaches should be found, in order to put an end to the suffering of the people of South Sudan.

The PSC delegation reiterated the AU's appreciation to IGAD, neighbouring countries and UNMISS, as well as international partners, for their relentless efforts to help restore sustainable peace, security and stability in South Sudan.

The PSC delegation noted the progress in the state of peace and security in the country and commended the Government of the Republic of South Sudan, UNMISS and other stakeholders for facilitating its Field Mission, as well as to the AU Special Representative of Chairperson of the Commission and the Head of the AU Liaison Office, Ambassador Joram Biswaro, and staff for the valuable support to the Delegation.

The Council will issue a formal Report on the outcome of its Mission to South Sudan soon.