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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
751ST MEETING
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA
8 FEBRUARY 2018

PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCLI)

COMMUNIQUÉ

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The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), at its 751st meeting held on 08 February 2018, adopted the following communiqué on the status of the Revitalization Process for the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict of the Republic of South Sudan:

Council,

1. **Takes note** of the briefings made by the African Union Commission Chairperson Special Representative in South Sudan, Ambassador Joram Biswaro, the Special Envoy of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) for South Sudan, Ambassador Ismail Wais, the Deputy Chairperson of the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (JMEC), Ambassador Lt. General Augustino S.K Njoroge, and the United Nations (UN) Special Envoy for Sudan and South Sudan, Mr. Nicholas Haysom, as well as the Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for South Sudan and Deputy Head of the UN Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS), Mr. Moustapha Soumaré, on the political, economic and humanitarian developments in South Sudan, as well as the ongoing IGAD-led High Level Revitalization Forum (HLRF). Council **also takes note** of the statements delivered by the Permanent Representatives of South Sudan; and Ethiopia, in its capacity as the Chair of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and African Member of the UN Security Council (A3), as well as Cote d'Ivoire in its capacity as A3;
2. **Recalls** its previous pronouncements on the situation in South Sudan, particularly communiqué PSC/AHG/COMM(DCXXVI), adopted at its 626th meeting held on 19 September 2016 in New York, at the level of Heads of State and Government, as well as communiqués and press statements issued at its 667th, 714th and 720th meetings held on 17 March 2017 and 29 August 2017 and 20 September 2017, respectively;
3. **Expresses its full support** for the ongoing IGAD Heads of States and Government engagement in the search for a lasting solution to the conflict in South Sudan and **reiterates its conviction** that the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (ARCSS) remains the only viable option towards addressing the challenges facing South Sudan. Council **commends** the South Sudanese parties for displaying the spirit of compromise that led to the signing on 21 December 2017, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, of the Agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities, Protection of Civilians and Humanitarian Access and **expresses** its full support to the second phase of the HLRF taking place from 5 to 16 February 2018 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. In this regard, Council **calls on** the South Sudanese parties to participate in the Forum in good faith, with a view to reaching a compromise and bringing South Sudan back to the path of sustainable peace and stability;
4. **Commends** the engagement of the AU High Representative for South Sudan, former President Alpha Omar Konare of Mali and **welcomes** the re-engagement of the AU High Level Ad Hoc Committee on South Sudan in the peace process in South Sudan. Council **encourages** further interactions between the AU High Level Ad Hoc Committee and the IGAD, with a view to ensure appropriate support to the IGAD led peace process;

5. **Also commends** the continued efforts by the JMEC, under the leadership of former President Festus Mogae of Botswana, towards ensuring the successful implementation of the peace process. Council further **commends** the work of Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring Mechanism (CTSAMM) to monitor and report violations as well as UNMISS efforts towards protecting civilians. Council **reiterates** its previous decisions regarding the deployment of the Regional Protection Force (RPF). In this regard, Council **expresses concern** over the slow progress in the deployment of the RPF and, consequently, **calls on** the UNMISS, the Transitional Government of National Unity (TGoNU) and the Troop Contributing Countries to promptly engage to ensure the completion of the deployment of the RPF in the next three months, with a view to scale up efforts aimed at protecting civilians under threat;

6. **Expresses its deep disappointment** over the reported violations of Cessation of Hostilities and the perpetuation of war, especially since these flagrant violations were committed shortly after the signing of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities, Protection of Civilians and Humanitarian Access. Council **notes with serious concern** the CTSAMM reports of December 2017, January and February 2018, detailing violations of the Agreement by all sides to the conflict. **Strongly condemns** the abuses and other acts of violence against the civilian populations, as well as the pillaging committed these violations. Council **reiterates its demand** to the South Sudanese warring parties and all other concerned to desist from further attacks against civilians, and to strictly comply with international humanitarian and human rights law. Council **further demands** the scrupulous respect of all provisions of the Agreement;

7. In this respect, **welcomes** the outcomes of the Trilateral Meeting between Chairperson of the AU Commission, the Chairperson of IGAD and the Secretary-General of the UN on 27 January 2018, in Addis Ababa and **fully supports** the subsequent statement emanating from the meeting which called for the parties to ensure full commitment to permanent peace in South Sudan. Furthermore, Council **encourages** the monitoring and implementation of decisions reached therein, through their designated High Representative and Special Envoys. Council **urges** the parties to refrain from any further violations of the Agreement and further **reiterates its determination** to ensure that the signatories of the Agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities, Protection of Civilians and Humanitarian Access are held accountable for their violations and are deprived of the means to continue fighting;

8. **Recalls** the Resolutions of the 28th Extraordinary Summit of IGAD, held on 7 November 2014, in Addis Ababa, calling on the collective action by IGAD on those that violate the cessation of hostilities. Within this context, Council **reiterates** its previous decisions on South Sudan, particularly communique PSC/MIN/COMM.(DCCXX) of 720th meeting held on 20 September 2017, to consider taking the necessary steps, including sanctions measures that could ensure effective and efficient implementation of the ACRSS. Council, once again, **urges** the AU Commission, in consultation with IGAD, to develop and submit possible punitive measures which could be applied against all those who continue to obstruct efforts towards the restoration of peace and security in South Sudan, at its next meeting on South Sudan;

9. **Expresses grave concern** over the deteriorating humanitarian situation in South Sudan and **calls on** Parties to the conflict to allow unhindered access for delivery of life-saving humanitarian assistance. Furthermore, Council **further calls on** all the Parties to give orders to

their forces to cease and desist from impeding the distribution of humanitarian assistance. Council **requests** CTSAMM together with the humanitarian actors to report any impediments to the work aimed at ensuring that perpetrators face punitive measures as outlined in international humanitarian law. Furthermore, Council **condemns** the continued inter-communal violence, in some parts of the country, that also impact negatively on the humanitarian access;

10. **Acknowledges** that intense international diplomatic approaches are also required to supplement the peace efforts carried out in addressing the conflict in South Sudan. Council **underscores** the need for genuine regional unity towards ending the conflict and achieve peace in South Sudan;

11. **Once again, underlines** the importance of complementarity and coordination of efforts, as well as the importance of avoiding mixed messages to the parties in South Sudan and **calls on** all actors involved in South Sudan to speak with “One Voice”. Consequently, Council **urges** for genuine cooperation and coordination between the IGAD Secretariat, AU Commission and UN system, which should draw up practical deliverables, in support of IGAD, in the coming months to advance the search for a speedy resolution of the conflict. Furthermore, Council **requests** the CTSAMM to continue to share regular updates and reports on the violations of the ACRSS and the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities, Protection of Civilians and Humanitarian Access with the PSC and the AU Commission. In this regard, Council **acknowledges** the importance of receiving reports from the UN Team of Experts and **decides** to invite the later to brief Council on their findings at its next meeting on South Sudan;

12. **Reemphasizes** its call on the AU Commission and the TGoNU to urgently sign the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the establishment of the Hybrid Court, without further delay, and **requests** the TGoNU to ensure the timely domestication of the MoU through the Transitional Legislative Assembly and to step up efforts in establishing the Commission for Truth, Reconciliation and Healing, and the Compensation and Reparations Authority as provided for by the ARCSS;

13. **Notes** that the current economic, political and security situation is not conducive for the proper conduct of the national elections, as envisaged in the ARCSS, and, hence, **looks forward** to the outcomes of the HLRF which is tasked with developing a revised and realistic timeline and implementation schedule towards a democratic election at the end of the transition period in South Sudan;

14. **Decides** to undertake a field visit to South Sudan, during the month of April 2018 to, once again, express the AU solidarity with the people of South Sudan and to also urge parties to the conflict to respect their commitments and put an end to the suffering of the people of South Sudan;

15. **Urges, once again,** AU Member states to extend both financial and human resources support to the African Union Mission in South Sudan (AUMISS) to enable it to follow up the implementation process of the peace ACRSS and Agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities, Protection of Civilians and Humanitarian Access and provide timely and accurate updates to Council and other AU policy organs;

16. **Requests** the AU Commission, together with IGAD and the UN, to provide an update on the evolution of the situation in South Sudan in April 2018;
17. **Decides** to remain seized of the matter.