

PSC/PR/COMM. (DCCCXV)

AFRICAN UNION

الاتحاد الأفريقي



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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL

815TH MEETING

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

4 DECEMBER 2018

PSC/PR/COMM. (DCCCXV)

COMMUNIQUE

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The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), at its 815th meeting held on 4 December 2018, adopted the following decision on the report of the Commission on Elections in Africa:

Council,

1. **Takes note** of the presentation of the report of the Commission on elections in Africa made by the AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, H.E. Mrs. Minata Samate Cessouma, on the twelve (12) national elections conducted from January to November 2018, namely, in: Djibouti, Sierra Leone, Egypt, Mali, Zimbabwe, Mauritania, Rwanda, Eswatini, Gabon, Cameroon, Sao Tome & Principe and Madagascar. Council **also takes note** of the briefings on the upcoming elections in December 2018 notably in Madagascar (presidential run off), Togo and DRC, and the three elections scheduled for the first quarter of 2019 (Nigeria, Senegal and Benin). Council **further takes note** of the statements made by Mauritania, Madagascar, Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, Egypt and Gabon;
2. **Reaffirms** its commitment to continuously support democratization process within the continent, in line with the relevant AU instruments, in particular the Constitutive Act, the Protocol relating to the establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, as well as the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance;
3. **Underlines once again the** centrality of pro-active initiatives and preventive diplomacy aimed at countering all form of elections-related violence, in Early Warning and Conflict Prevention. In this respect, Council **reiterates** the critical role of credible elections in peacebuilding and democratic consolidation, mindful that shortcomings, irregularities and malpractices in electoral processes are driving factors in election-related violence in Africa;
4. **Congratulates** all Member States which have successfully conducted peaceful elections and **encourages** those that are yet to organize their own elections, to emulate the best practices already observed in other Member States. Council **further encourages** all Member States to continue taking appropriate measures aimed at ensuring the credibility and legitimacy of their outcomes, among others, through effective and transparent voter registrations exercises, civic education on inclusivity, diversity management, tolerance and culture of peace, and **reiterates** the importance of using legal channels to address cases of election-related grievances;
5. **Stresses the need** for sturdy constitutional, institutional, and legal frameworks to build solid foundations for electoral governance and administration. In this respect, Council **reiterates** AU's call to Member States for continuous efforts aimed at strengthening national Election Management Bodies (EMBs) in Africa, as well as their institutional capacity, with a view to support them in discharging their mandate and to further enhance their ability to better manage pre and post-election tensions and disputes;

6. **Reaffirms the need** for enhanced citizen participation in democratic electoral processes, through appropriate mechanisms that encourage people to take part in elections. In the same vein, Council **recognizes** the centrality of political parties in the democratic electoral processes and **calls on** Member States to reinforce their institutional Framework with a view to allow greater political participation and inclusiveness in electoral processes and reduce risks of elections-related violence;
7. **Reiterates its call** to Member States to take appropriate measures to enhance Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment through democratic electoral processes;
8. **Encourages** the Commission, through the appropriate channels, to share with concerned Member States the outcomes and recommendations of the electoral observer missions, with a view to contributing to enhance their capacities to conduct electoral processes;
9. **Calls on** all AU Member States that have not yet done so to sign, ratify, domesticate and implement the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance;
10. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.