

AFRICAN UNION

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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

705TH MEETING

25 JULY 2017

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

COMMUNIQUE

The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), at its 705th meeting held on 25 July 2017, adopted the following decision on the Regional Capabilities of the African Standby Force.

Council,

1. **Takes note** of the presentation made by the Acting Director of the Peace and Security Department on the Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the African Standby Force (ASF). Council **also takes note** of the statements made by representatives of some Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs), namely Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Eastern Africa Standby Force (EASF) and the North African Regional Capability (NARC);
2. **Recalls** the relevant provisions of Article 13 of the Protocol relating to the establishment of the Peace and Security Council. Council **also recall** its Press Statement PSC/PR/BR.(DCLVII) adopted at its 657th meeting held on 9 February 2017 and the discussion at its 677th meeting held on 6 April 2017 on the status of the African Standby Force and its Rapid Deployment Capability (ASF-RDC) and the African Capacity for the Immediate Response to Crises (ACIRC);
3. **Further recalls** Assembly/AU/Dec.589 (XXVI) adopted by the 26th Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly, held in January 2016, which directed the Commission to facilitate the conduct of an “Evaluation Mission to be undertaken by the Commission and the Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms to the Regional Economic Communities to verify the state of readiness of Regional Standby Forces”;
4. **Commends** the Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the ASF, including the recommendations on the objectives of the verification, confirmation and validation of the ASF pledged capabilities by the Regional Standby Forces, as well as updates relating to policy development, training and exercises and mission support capabilities namely: Command, Control, Communication and Information Systems, the ASF Continental Logistics Base and its relationship with the Regional Logistics Bases, Strategic Lift, Continental/Regional Movement Control, Peace Fund and the AU Common Cost document;

5. **Expresses its appreciation** to Professor Ibrahim Gambari and the Panel of Experts for accepting to undertake the verification of pledged capabilities, as well as for their dedication and commitment to ensure the successful conduct of the exercise;
6. **Reiterates the need** for regular and continuous stock taking of the respective efforts by RECs/RMs to enhance the ASF, including the need to explore using capabilities of Member States and RECs/RMs that are operationally ready, in line with Article 13 of the Protocol Relating to the Peace and Security Council of the African Union;
7. **Further commends** the Commission and the RECs/RMs for the progress and collaboration that enabled for the commencement of the verification, confirmation and validation of ASF pledged capabilities and **calls on** Member States and the RECs/RMs to extend the necessary cooperation to the Panel of Experts, with a view to enable it to come up with a report that will clearly articulate current state of readiness of the ASF and regional capabilities, including the way forward;
8. **Agrees** to dedicate a meeting to consider the Report of the Commission on the findings from the verification, confirmation and validation exercise, conducted by Professor Gambari and his team, before its submission to the Executive Council, through the 10th Ordinary Meeting of the Specialised Technical Committee on Defence Safety and Security (STCDSS), scheduled to take place in October 2017, and, subsequently, to the 30th Assembly of the African Union in January 2018 for validation and endorsement, in line with Assembly/AU/Dec.589 (XXVI) of January 2016;
9. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.