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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
816th MEETING

5 DECEMBER 2018
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/COMM. (DCCCXVI)

COMMUNIQUE

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The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), at its 816th meeting held on 5 December 2018, considered the renewal of the mandate of the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF) against Boko Haram and the Regional Strategy for the Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience of the Boko Haram affected areas of the Lake Chad Basin and adopted the following decision:

Council,

1. **Takes note** of the opening statement made by the Permanent Representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt, H.E. Ambassador Osama Mahmoud Abdelkhalek, in his capacity as the Chairperson of the PSC for the month of December 2018. Council **also takes note** of the Report of the Chairperson of the AU Commission on the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) and the African Support to the Force, as well as the presentation by H.E. Ambassador Mamman Nuhu, the Executive Secretary of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) and Head of the MNJTF, on the Regional Strategy for the Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience of the Boko Haram-affected areas of the Lake Chad Basin, as well as by the Head of the AU Liaison Office in Chad, Madame Zaina Nyiramata. Council **further takes note** of the statements made by the representatives of Benin, Chad, Niger, Nigeria, in its capacity as member of the LCBC as well as the Chair of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and Gabon, in its capacity as the Chair of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), as well as by the representatives of the United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU);

2. **Recalls** its earlier decisions and pronouncements on the activities of the Boko Haram terrorist group and the efforts aimed at eradicating this terrorist group, in particular Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM (DCCXXXVIII)] adopted at its 738th meeting held on 7 December 2017; Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.(CDLXXXIX)] adopted at its 489th meeting held on 3 March 2015 and Communiqué [PSC/AHG/COMM. 2(CDLXXXIV)] adopted at its 484th meeting held on 29 January 2015;

3. **Welcomes** the efforts and significant progress made by the MNJTF and the LCBC Member States plus Benin in the fight against Boko Haram terrorist group, which have considerably weakened the capability of the group and continued to successfully dislodge it from its strongholds. Council **emphasizes that**, despite MNJTF successes, the Boko Haram terrorist group remains a serious threat to peace and security in the region, particularly as it still possesses advanced capabilities to launch attacks against civilians and the armed forces in the region and cooperate with other terrorist groups in the region and in the neighboring regions;

4. **Expresses deep concern** over the increasing use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) by Boko Haram in some of its operations. In this regard, Council **requests** the Commission, in coordination with the LCBC Member States plus Benin, to engage with Partners and other relevant stakeholders to urgently explore the possibility of swift and effective responses to this

threat including through identifying and blocking the source of acquiring these technologies and equipment as well as any other form of political, logistical, military and financial support to Boko Haram terrorist group;

5. **Pays tribute** to the gallant soldiers who have paid the ultimate price and **expresses** heartfelt condolences to families of the civilians and military personnel deceased and their respective Governments. Council **encourages** MNJTF Forces to remain resolute and vigilant in its campaign against Boko Haram terrorist group until it is completely defeated;

6. **Condemns in strongest terms** the terrorist attacks and all crimes perpetrated by Boko Haram terrorist group and against the military personnel and law enforcement officials as well as the abuses and violations perpetrated by Boko Haram against innocent civilians, including the kidnapping and killing of humanitarian aid workers, which have resulted in widespread displacement and exacerbated a huge Humanitarian crisis in the region. In this regard, Council **calls on** LCBC Member States plus Benin, with the support of the international community, to take the necessary steps to resettle the displaced population, provide them with safety and security, and also to provide psycho-social rehabilitation programs for the surrendering Boko Haram elements and their families, as well as victims who would have been freed from abduction by the terrorist group, while continuing to ensuring rule of law and bringing terrorism perpetrators to justice;

7. **Recalls** the First Regional Stabilization Conference convened in November 2017, in N'Djamena, Chad, which called for the harmonization and coordination of humanitarian and development efforts in the Lake Chad region. Council **further recalls** that the Conference requested the LCBC, with the support of the Commission, to facilitate the development of a stabilization strategy for the Boko Haram affected areas in the Lake Chad Basin region. In this regard, Council **commends** the collaborative efforts by the concerned countries, LCBC, the AU Commission with the support of AU partners, that led to the successfully development of a comprehensive stabilization, recovery and resilience strategy of the Boko Haram affected areas in the Lake Chad Basin region;

8. **Welcomes** the outcomes of the Ministerial Conference of the LCBC Member States, held on 30 August 2018, in Abuja Nigeria, which validated and adopted the Regional Strategy for the Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience of the Boko Haram-affected areas and instructed the Executive Secretary to make the necessary arrangements for its submission to Council for consideration and endorsement. Council **also welcomes** the renewed political commitment demonstrated by the countries of the region including at the Extraordinary Summit of the Lake Chad Basin countries held in N'djamena on 29 November 2018;

9. **Endorses** the Regional Strategy for the Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience of the Boko Haram affected areas of the Lake Chad Basin, as a good example of national and regional ownership and important contribution to implementing a holistic approach in eradicating the

terrorism of Boko Haram, and **urges** the LCBC, in collaboration with the Commission and with the support of international partners, to expedite the implementation of the Strategy, in order to maintain the momentum and build on the gains already achieved. In the same context, Council **requests** the Commission to support the LCBC Secretariat in urgently develop a clear roadmap for the implementation of the Strategy, and in developing a comprehensive resource mobilization strategy, as well as to convene a solidarity conference under the framework of the Africa Solidarity Initiative;

10. **Urges** the United Nations to harmonize its Boko Haram Strategy and relevant activities with the Regional Strategy for the Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience of the Boko Haram affected areas in the Lake Chad Basin to ensure further synergy and complementarity;

11. **Commends** the bilateral and multilateral partners, for their continued support to the countries of the region and **requests** them to step up this support. In this regard, Council **welcomes** the convening of the High Level Conference on the Lake Chad region, in Berlin, 3-4 September 2018, and the pledges of 2.17 billion USD made to support enhanced humanitarian, development and peace building efforts in the region. Council **encourages** all countries and institutions, which pledged resources during the said Conference to expeditiously fulfil their pledges. In the same context, Council **underscores the importance** of ensuring that all support provided is in line with the priorities, needs and objectives of the concerned countries and the MNJTF and respects the national and regional ownership of this endeavour;

12. **Urges** for greater complementarity and enhanced synergy among the various processes, initiatives and mechanisms addressing peace and security in the Sahel and the Lake Chad Basin regions, and invites the Commission to contribute to this end;

13. **Also requests** the Commission to make efforts towards mobilizing additional support, in order for the MNJTF to successfully fill any capabilities gaps, particularly, in terms of Counter-Improvised Explosive Devices (C-IED) equipment, Amphibious equipment, communication equipment, and for the Task-Force to have, at its disposal, the necessary resources for effectively implementing Quick Impact and Peace Consolidating Projects, as well as to provide humanitarian support to the affected population in need;

14. **Welcomes** the renewed pledges made by the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Kingdom of Morocco to enhance the capability of MNJTF, particularly in the areas of training, capacity building and countering terrorist and radical narratives Council **requests** the MNJTF and LCBC in collaboration with the African Union Commission to outline their specific needs in this regard with a view to fully utilizing these pledges, and in this context, **encourages** other Member States to emulate the example of these two countries and also support the efforts of the LCBC while underlining the importance of African-African and trilateral formats of cooperation in this regard;

15. **Requests** the newly established AU Development Agency/NEPAD, CISSA, ACSRT to contribute towards the implementation of the Strategy. Council also **emphasises the urgent need** to expedite the operationalisation of the AU Humanitarian Agency with a view to contributing to the implementation of the Regional Strategy for Stabilisation, Recovery and Resilience of Lake Chad Basin areas affected by Boko Haram. In the same context, Council **requests** the AU Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development Centre in Cairo, once operational, to consider means and ways to contribute to the implementation process;

16. **Requests** the Commission and the LCBC Secretariat to provide biannual briefings to update Council on progress made in the implementation of the Strategy, in line with the relevant provisions of Communiqué [PSC/AHG/ COMM.2 (CDLXXXIV)] of 29 January 2015;

17. **Decides** to renew the mandate of the MNJTF for another period of twelve (12) months, effective from 31 January 2019;

18. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.