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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
1178TH MEETING

10 OCTOBER 2023
ADDIS-ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/COMM.1178 (2023)

COMMUNIQUE



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Adopted by the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) at its 1178th meeting held on 10 October 2023, on Briefing by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) on its Activities and the Humanitarian Situation in Africa.

The Peace and Security Council:

Recalling the decisions of the AU Assembly on humanitarian actions in Africa, particularly Decision [EX.CL/Dec.1145 (XL)] adopted by the AU Executive Council at its 40th Ordinary Session held in February 2022; Decision [Assembly/AU/Dec.604(XXVI)] which adopted the Common African Position on Humanitarian Effectiveness and endorsed the recommendation for the establishment of the African Humanitarian Agency (AfHA) to ensure effectiveness of AU responses to humanitarian crises on the Continent; and Decision [Ext/Assembly/AU/Decl.(XV)] adopted by the 15th Extraordinary AU Humanitarian Summit and Pledging Conference held in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea in May 2022, which also adopted the Malabo Declaration on Terrorism and Unconstitutional Changes of Government in Africa; and also recalling Communiqué [PSC/AHG/COMM.1043 (2021)] adopted at its 1043rd meeting at the level of Heads of State and Government held on 29 October 2021; and Press Statement [PSC/PR/BR.1155(2023)], adopted at its 1155th meeting held on 18 May 2023;

Recalling the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the OAU and ICRC, signed on 4 May 1992, and the accreditation the ICRC to the Organization of African Unity (OAU) on key policy issues on humanitarian action;

Noting the opening remarks by H.E. Ambassador Daniel Owassa, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Congo to the AU and the Chairperson of the PSC for the month of October 2023, the statement made by Patrick Youssef, ICRC Regional Director for Africa; and

Reaffirming its commitment to protect and provide humanitarian assistance to refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons resulting from armed conflict, natural disasters and climate change-related humanitarian crises on the Continent.

Acting under Article 7 of its Protocol, the Peace, and Security Council:

1. **Commends** the ICRC for its humanitarian efforts in Africa, including for the commitment of 45 percent of its budget in protecting and assisting refugees and internally displaced persons resulting from armed conflicts, violence extremism, climate change related crises and natural disasters on the Continent; **acknowledges** the support of AU partners and **encourages** them to continue to provide timely and effective humanitarian support to the population in need in Africa;
2. **Expresses deep concern** over the growing humanitarian situation on the Continent, particularly in the Horn of Africa region, the Sahel region, the Lake Chad Basin, and parts of northern and southern Africa, as a result of armed conflicts, violent extremism, as well as the growing impact of climate change related disasters, which include droughts, floods, famine, cyclones and earthquakes;
3. **Demands** the warring parties to establish humanitarian corridors and allow unhindered humanitarian access to the population in need and evacuation of all injured persons; as well as to guarantee protection of humanitarian actors;
4. **Calls for** an immediate and unconditional cessation of hostilities in all conflict areas in Africa, in particular, in Sudan and eastern Democratic Republic of Congo;

5. ***Strongly urges*** all belligerents to fully observe and comply with their obligations under the 1949 Geneva Conventions on International Humanitarian Law; and to respect International Human Rights Law, as well as to discriminate between innocent civilians and legitimate military targets; respect the safety and security of diplomatic missions and staff, protection of public infrastructures including, water and electricity supplies, schools and hospitals, and the welfare of women, children and the elderly;
6. ***Underscores the need*** for Member States to invest in humanitarian diplomacy, the promotion of operational knowledge and expertise, and to mainstream International humanitarian Law in all peace efforts;
7. ***Expresses concern*** over the dwindling resources to respond to humanitarian crises in Africa, taking into consideration the increase of armed conflicts and natural disasters; in this regard, ***called on*** AU Member States and the international community to redouble their support to humanitarian actions on the continent;
8. ***Expresses deep appreciation*** to all Member States hosting refugees and displaced persons irrespective of their limited capacities; and ***encourages*** Member States to continue to open their borders to assist persons seeking asylum in line with international and continental instruments;
9. ***Appeals*** for enhanced international support towards refugees and host communities, including through the provision of adequate, flexible, predictable, and consistent humanitarian financing to enable host countries and communities to respond to their immediate humanitarian and longer-term development needs; also appeals for additional resources for the AU humanitarian Agency to enable it to more effectively discharge its mandate;
10. ***Emphasizes*** the need for enhanced regional and international support and commitment to address the structural root causes and drivers of violent conflicts on the Continent; and
11. ***Decides*** to remain actively seized of the matter.

2023-10-10

Communiqué of the 1178th Meeting of the Peace and Security Council, Held on 10 October 2023, on Briefing by the International Committee of the Red Cross on its Activities and the Humanitarian Situation in Africa.

Peace and Security Council

African Union Commission

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