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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
1194TH MEETING

24 JANUARY 2024
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/COMM.1194 (2024)

COMMUNIQUE



COMMUNIQUÉ

Adopted by the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), at its 1194th meeting held on 24 January 2024, on Consideration of the Report of the Chairperson of the AU Commission on Elections conducted in Africa from July to December 2023 and an Outlook for 2024.

The Peace and Security Council,

Recalling the AU Constitutive Act, the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG); the OAU/AU Declaration on the Principles Governing Democratic Elections [AHG/Decl.1 (XXXVIII)]; the Guidelines for AU Election Observation and Monitoring Missions; Article 3 (f) of the Protocol relating to the establishment of the AU PSC, and all previous decisions of the Council on elections in Africa, in particular the Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.1165 (2023)] adopted at its 1165th meeting held on 31 July 2023;

Noting the opening remarks made by H.E. Ambassador Amma Adomaa Twum-Amoah, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Ghana to the AU and PSC Chairperson for January 2024; and the presentation of the Half-Year Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on Elections held in Africa from July to December 2023 and an Outlook for 2024 by H.E. Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, the AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS);

Also noting the statements made by the representatives of the following AU Member States which organized elections from July to December 2023, namely: the Republic of Zimbabwe, the Republic of Liberia, the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Kingdom of Eswatini; as well as the statements of the representatives of the Regional Economic Communities/ Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs);

Mindful of the threat posed by the resurgence of Unconstitutional Changes of Government and flawed electoral processes to peace, security and stability in Africa and **acknowledging** the critical importance of inclusive, peaceful, democratic, transparent and credible elections, as well as peaceful transfer of power as key factors for deepening democracy, peace, security, stability and sustainable development in Member States; the realization of the AU noble goal of Silencing the Guns in Africa by 2030, the AU Agenda 2063 and its First Ten-Year Implementation Plan, as well as the United Nations Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development Goals;

Re-affirming the AU zero tolerance for Unconstitutional Changes of Government, in all its forms and manifestations, in keeping with the 2000 Lomé Declaration, the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, the Accra Declaration of May 2022 and the Malabo Declaration adopted by the 16th Extraordinary Session of the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government held on 28 May 2022, in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea; and

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

1. **Welcomes and adopts** the Report of the Chairperson of the AU Commission on Elections in Africa for the period July to December 2023 and the prospects for the elections to be organized in Africa during the first half of 2024;
2. **Expresses deep appreciation** to the AU Commission, particularly the Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security, for the continued support for electoral processes in Member States, including through the provision of technical assistance and deployment of election observation

missions and increased representation of women and youth in those missions, as well as through its Electoral and Preventive Diplomacy Missions;

3. **Urges** the Commission to ensure that all support to Member States is provided timeously, as well as to enhance its working relations with domestic election observer groups and to promote initiatives enabling them to better carry out their observation of electoral processes in complete freedom, impartiality and in a responsible manner, in accordance with the relevant international, continental and regional standards and the relevant national legal framework;

4. **Congratulates** all Member States which successfully organized elections in the second half of 2023; and **encourages** them to spare no effort to implement the relevant recommendations of the AU Election Observation and Technical Assistance Missions in order to improve the quality of future elections; **congratulates in particular** the people of Liberia for consolidating their democracy through peaceful transfer of power;

5. **Commends** the Commission, in partnership with the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia for organizing the meeting on the Declaration of Principles (DoP) on International Electoral Observation at the AU headquarters from 14 to 17 November 2023, wherein African and-international institutions specializing in democratic elections and governance engaged on improved cooperation;

6. **Commends** the Kingdom of Morocco for facilitating capacity building programmes for African election observers and **calls** for the continuation of such programmatic support to the Commission;

7. **Encourages** Member States to continue to further strengthen the institutional capacities of national elections management bodies and the judiciary, including through adequate resourcing, as well as to ensure the independence and professionalism of these institutions;

8. **Reiterates the call** for all Member States in political transition to strictly adhere to and respect their election calendars and **urges** all members of the transitional authorities in these countries to refrain from enlisting their candidature in the election process to mark the end of the transition process;

9. **Specifically commends** the efforts deployed by AU Commission's Political Affairs, Peace and Security Department, which resulted in better representation of women and youth in elections observations in Africa; and **urges** the Commission to ensure the inclusivity and sustained participation of all categories of Africans in AU observer missions ;

10. **Emphasizes the importance** of enhanced coordination between the Election observation missions of the AU, REC/REMs, and all other election observation missions across the Continent;

11. **Further commends** the AU Commission for finalizing the 2022 Annual Report on Elections in Africa: "Democracy at Work" in accordance with the guidelines stipulated by Council in its Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.1165 (2023)] and **looks forward** for its dissemination; **urges** the Commission to finalize the Documentary on its Election Observation Missions;

12. **Appeals** to the Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC) to allocate adequate financial resources to support election-related activities of the AU Commission;

13. **Underscores the critical role** of all RECs/RMs and, in this respect, **encourages** them to continue to redouble their efforts towards ensuring successful organization of credible and transparent elections in Member States;

14. **Expresses deep concern** on the increased use of misinformation, disinformation, and propaganda campaigns through the use of emerging technologies, including social media platforms, during national electoral processes, with dire repercussions on democratic governance, and **stresses** the need to monitor the impact of such activities on election outcomes and take policy action to curb such a growing threat to democracy;

15. **Underscores the importance** of addressing voter apathy by encouraging election management bodies to embark on sensitization and civic education programmes during electoral processes to ensure high voter turnout, and in the same context, **encourages** civil society organizations and the media to play a positive role by contributing towards the successful organization of elections in Member States including through election-related civic education and objective reporting;

16. **Stresses the need** for all Member States that will be organizing elections in the first half of 2024 to own their electoral processes, among others, by mobilizing the required resources from within their countries; to take necessary steps, with the continued technical support of the AU Commission and the RECs/RMs to create conducive condition for more meaningful participation of women, youth and people living with disabilities in national election processes; to ensure peaceful, inclusive, democratic, transparent and credible elections; as well as to ensure that all election-related disputes are timeously and peacefully resolved using existing legal and alternative dispute resolution channels; and

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

2024-01-24

Communiqué of the 1194th Meeting of the Peace and Security Council, held on 24 January 2024, on the Consideration of the Half-Year Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on Elections in Africa: July to December 2023 and Outlook for 2024.

Peace and Security Council

African Union Commission

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