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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
531ST MEETING
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA
6 AUGUST 2015

PSC/BR/COMM.(DXXXI)

PRESS STATEMENT

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The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 531st meeting held on 6 August 2015, received a briefing on the elections in Burundi.

Council took note of the briefing by the Commission, on the parliamentary and presidential elections held in Burundi on 29 June and on 21 July 2015, respectively. Council also took note of the statements made by the representatives of Burundi and that of Uganda on behalf of the East African Community (EAC) Facilitator, H.E. President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni of Uganda.

Council recalled its earlier communiqués and press statements on the situation in Burundi, in particular, communiqué PSC/PR/COMM.(DXXIII) of the 523rd meeting held on 9 July 2015, communiqué PSC/PR/COMM.2(DXV) of the 515th meeting held at the Heads of State and Government level, as well as the press releases and statements by the Chairperson of the Commission. Council, once again, re-affirmed the determination of the AU to fully assume its responsibilities as a Guarantor of the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement in Burundi signed in August 2000, concluded after sustained efforts by the region and Africa as a whole, with the support of the international community.

Council recognised the contribution made by Burundi towards the promotion of peace, security and stability in Africa, including through troop contributions to the AU- led peace operations in countries such as Somalia, under the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), as well as in the Central African Republic (CAR), under the African Union Mission in the CAR, MISCA.

Council took note of the recent parliamentary and presidential elections. Council stressed that the current challenges facing Burundi can only be solved through an inclusive dialogue without any preconditions, leading to the formation of a government of national unity, as proposed by the EAC and endorsed by the Council at its 523rd meeting, referred to above. In this regard, Council commended the efforts being exerted by, and reiterated its support for the EAC, through its facilitator, H.E. President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni with a view to finding an early consensual solution to the challenges facing Burundi and encouraged him to persevere in his engagement with the Burundian stakeholders.

Council expressed deep concern over the deterioration of the security situation in Burundi marked by political assassinations and increased violence. In this regard, Council appealed to all Burundian stakeholders to exercise maximum restraint and put an immediate end to violence, in the interest of their country and in order to safeguard the tremendous achievements made by the country since the signing of the Arusha Agreement.

Council also expressed deep concern at the deteriorating humanitarian situation and appeals to the international community, in particular, to the humanitarian agencies to continue to provide assistance to the population in need, in particular the internally displaced persons and refugees in neighbouring countries. In this respect, Council took note with satisfaction of the solidarity being demonstrated by the countries of the region.

Council further commended the efforts of the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the Commission for the Great Lakes Region, in support to the efforts of the region. Council welcomed the deployment, by the Commission, of human rights and observers in Burundi and called on all Burundi stakeholders to extend full cooperation to these observers.

Council, once again, reiterated its call for all AU Member States, the United Nations and all other international partners to cooperate with the EAC in the overall efforts aimed at achieving lasting peace, security and stability in Burundi;