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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
768TH MEETING
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA
26 APRIL 2018

PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCLXVIII)

COMMUNIQUÉ

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The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), at its 768th meeting held on 26 April 2018, adopted the following decision on the situation in the Republic of South Sudan, as well as on the report of its field mission to South Sudan:

Council,

1. **Takes note** of the briefings made by the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the Commission in South Sudan, Ambassador Joram Biswaro, the Special Envoy of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) for South Sudan, Ambassador Ismail Wais, the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General and Head of the United Nations Office to the AU, Mr. Haile Menkerios and Deputy Head of the UN Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS), Mr. Moustapha Soumaré, as well as the Ag. Coordinator of the Committee of the UN Expert Team on South Sudan on the political, socio-economic and humanitarian situations in South Sudan. Council **also takes note** of the statements made by the Permanent Representatives of South Sudan and Ethiopia, in its capacity as the Chair of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD);
2. **Recalls** its previous pronouncements on the situation in South Sudan, particularly PSC/AHG/COMM(DCXXVI), adopted at its 626th meeting held on 19 September 2016, in New York, at the level of Heads of State and Government, and communiqué PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCLI) adopted at its 751st meeting held on 8 February 2018;
3. **Commends** the IGAD and the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (JMEC) for their unwavering support to the people of South Sudan in their search for a lasting solution to the conflict in their country. Council **commends** of the invaluable work done by the CTSAMM to ensure compliance with signed agreements. Council **calls on** the TGoNU and all armed movements to fully cooperate with Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring Mechanism (CTSAMM) in discharging its mandate and **underscores** that any obstruction to the work of CTSAMM shall be deemed as violation of the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (ARCSS);
4. **Expresses its full support** to the IGAD on the ongoing High Level Revitalization Forum (HLRF) in the search for a lasting solution to the conflict in South Sudan. Council **reiterates its conviction** that the ARCSS remains the only viable option for addressing the challenges facing South Sudan and **encourages** the parties to ensure that the HLRF is not used as a platform to initiate a new mediation process, as such action is not purpose of the Forum;
5. **Welcomes** the Communiqué of the 61st Extra-Ordinary Session of IGAD Council of Ministers on the situation in South Sudan held on 26 March 2018 in Addis Ababa. Council **notes** the ongoing efforts being made by IGAD towards addressing the political and security, as well as the challenges in South Sudan. Council **notes with concern** the challenges encountered during Phase II of the HLRF and the postponement of the HLRF taking into consideration its prospects for restoring peace and security in South Sudan. In this regard, Council **urges** the IGAD to urgently finalize its consultations with the various interlocutors and to convene the third phase of the

HLRF now slated for 17 May 2018. Council **reiterates its call** for an inclusive HLRF ensuring that all stakeholders are included. In this regard, Council **appeals** to the South Sudanese parties to participate in the Forum in good faith, with a view to reaching an amicable compromise and bringing South Sudan back to the path of sustainable peace and stability;

6. **Strongly encourages** the Transitional Government of National Unity (TGoNU) of South Sudan and the various armed movements to work towards an improved security situation in the country and **urges** them to commit towards finding lasting political solution in their country, especially given the fragility of the current political and security situation. Council **calls on** the parties to respect their commitments as outlined in the Ceasefire Agreement of December 2017 and **calls on** all the parties to desist, henceforth, from using inflammatory language that potentially escalates tensions amongst South Sudanese;

7. **Reiterates** its readiness in line with its previous decisions on South Sudan, particularly communique PSC/MIN/COMM. (DCCXX) of 720th meeting held on 20 September 2017, to consider taking the necessary steps, including sanctions measures that could ensure effective and efficient implementation of the ACRSS. In this respect, Council, **renews** its requests to the AU Commission, in consultation with IGAD, to develop and submit proposals on punitive measures which could be applied against all those who continue to obstruct efforts towards the restoration of peace and security in South Sudan. Council **welcomes** the decision of the IGAD Council of Ministers, of 26 March 2018, in line with the IGAD's Communiqué of 26 January 2018, to take targeted sanctions against individual violators and refer those ones to the PSC for appropriate punitive measures;

8. **Acknowledges with satisfaction** the efforts deployed by multiple actors through different peace processes in finding lasting peace in South Sudan, namely the HLRF launched by IGAD, the National Dialogue launched by H.E President Salva Kiir and the reunification of the SPLM currently led by Uganda and Egypt. In this regard, Council **invites** both Member States to coordinate to provide a briefing on the SPLM reunification process to better understand the impact of the overall peace process. Council **urges** all stakeholders involved in those different processes to harmonize and coordinate their efforts with the view of converging all such initiatives in order to achieve peace and security in the country;

9. **Takes note** of the concerns expressed by various stakeholders in South Sudan, regarding the IGAD-led peace process, as well as the challenges affecting the JMEC process. In this regard, Council **decides** to commence engagements with IGAD and JMEC, in order to exchange views on the peace process in South Sudan;

10. **Commends** the progress made in the deployment of the Regional Protection Force (RPF) for the protection of civilians and appealed to the TGoNU, UNMISS and the Troop Contributing Countries to finalize the outstanding processes, as soon as possible in order to ensure the completion of the deployment of the RPF. Council **calls on** the TGoNU and the UNMISS to develop and sustain and collaborative working environment to ensure that the RPF fulfills its mandate of protecting civilians under threat;

11. **Acknowledges** the expressed readiness of the TGoNU to address the issue of impunity in the country and to accelerate the establishment of the Hybrid Court in line with the provisions of the ACRSS and **requests** the AU Commission and the TGoNU to finalize the outstanding issues in order to operationalize the Court. In this context, Council **reiterates its request** to the TGoNU to ensure the timely domestication of the Memorandum of Understanding through the Transitional Legislative Assembly and to scale up efforts in establishing the Commission for Truth, Reconciliation and Healing, and the Compensation and Reparations Authority as provided for by the ARCSS;
12. **Requests** the AU High-Level ad-hoc Committee on South Sudan, the Chairperson of the AU Commission and his High Representative for South Sudan, former President Alpha Omar Konare of Mali, with the support of the Chairperson of the Union, to pursue and intensify the engagement with the south Sudanese parties, in consultation with IGAD, with a view to ensuring enhanced support to the IGAD-led peace and reconciliation efforts in South Sudan. Council **reiterates its demand** to the South Sudanese warring parties and all other concerned to desist from further attacks against civilians, and to strictly comply with international humanitarian and human rights law and the provisions of the Agreement, while awaiting for the lasting solution to the conflict in the country;
13. **Welcomes** the decision by IGAD that the condition of SPLM/IO Leader Dr Riek Machar be addressed as soon as possible and that he be allowed to resume his contribution to the search for lasting peace and security in South Sudan. Council **concurs** with the IGAD decision of 26 March 2018, on ensuring that Dr. Machar does not exacerbate the conflict in South Sudan but rather should renounce violence in favor of peaceful engagement;
14. **Expresses grave concern** over the deteriorating socio-economic and humanitarian situation in South Sudan and **calls on** all Member States and international partners to genuinely provide support to the people of South Sudan to alleviate their suffering and assist the TGoNU to rebuild various Governmental institutions to ensure its stability, while coordinating and harmonizing their support with a view of ending the conflict and achieving peace in South Sudan;
15. **Decides** to adopt the report of its field mission to South Sudan during the period from 4 to 9 April 2018, with its recommendations and **requests** the AU Commission to dispatch it to all stakeholders for the implementation of the recommendations with a view to putting an end to the suffering of the people of South Sudan;
16. **Decides** to remain seized of the matter.