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**PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL**

**54<sup>th</sup> MEETING**

**2 JUNE 2006**

**ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**

**PSC/PR/Comm(LIV)**

**COMMUNIQUE**

**COMMUNIQUE OF THE 54<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE  
PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL**

The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) at its 54<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 2 June 2006, adopted the following decision on the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC):

**Council,**

1. **Takes note** of the Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) [PSC/PR/2(LIV)];
2. **Underscores** the importance which the African Union attaches to the smooth conduct of the presidential and legislative elections due on 30 July 2006, which should conclude the ongoing transition, for the consolidation of peace and reconciliation in the DRC. In this regard, Council **welcomes** the progress made in the preparations for the elections and the high turnout of the Congolese people in the voter identification and registration exercise, which commenced on 20 June 2005, and in the constitutional referendum held on 18 and 19 December 2005. Council **encourages** the people of Congo to participate massively in the elections due on 30 July 2006 in order to, once again, demonstrate their commitment to peace and national reconciliation;
3. **Expresses** its support for the transition institutions, particularly the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) and the High Authority for the Media (HAM), as well as the Supreme Court, for the efforts they have deployed to create the necessary conditions for the smooth conduct of the electoral process and for the successful conclusion of the transitional period;
4. **Invites** the Congolese political stakeholders to support the electoral process, and to refrain from any action that can derail the smooth conduct of the elections. Council also **calls upon** the candidates for the two elections due on 30 July 2006, to conduct responsible electioneering campaign and to respect the existing institutions and scrupulously comply with the existing rules. Council **urges** the concerned parties to have recourse to the bodies and procedures put in place for this purpose, to consider and pronounce on any complaints they may have in the aftermath of the elections;
5. **Urges** the media to support the ongoing process in the country and to refrain from any activities likely to exacerbate tension before, during and after the elections;
6. **Requests** the Commission to consider ways and means to provide technical, administrative and financial support to the institutions involved in the electoral process, in close coordination with Member States. Council **further requests** the Commission to speed up the ongoing preparations for the timely deployment of a strong AU Civilian Electoral Observer Mission;

7. **Authorizes**, should the need arises, that Military Observers be deployed under the authority of the AU and in coordination with the Commission, in order to contribute to the creation of an environment conducive to the successful holding of the elections. Such a deployment should be carried out in close consultation with the Government of the DRC and all other stakeholders;
8. **Takes note with satisfaction** of the readiness of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) to support the electoral process, as well as the efforts deployed by some Member States to contribute to the successful conclusion of the peace and reconciliation process in the DRC, including the elections scheduled for 30 July 2006. Council **encourages** Member States, which are in a position to do so, to continue to support the peace process in the DRC, particularly by fielding observers for the 30 July 2006 elections, in coordination with the Commission;
9. **Encourages** the Chairperson of the Commission to appoint a high level Special Envoy to lead AU's efforts to monitor the conduct of the electoral process and assist in the resolution of any difficulties that could arise;
10. **Underscores** the importance of close coordination among all the international actors involved in the electoral process in order to ensure the smooth conduct of the elections and the successful conclusion of the transition process;
11. **Expresses satisfaction** at the progressive restoration of confidence and trust among the countries of the region and the positive impact of this development on the peace and reconciliation process in the DRC;
12. **Commends** the United Nations for its support to the peace and electoral processes in the DRC, particularly through MONUC. Council **urges** the international community, including the European Union and the AU partners in the peace process in the DRC, to continue their support to the peace process in the DRC and to provide the requisite resources to assist in the consolidation of the institutions that will be established as a result of the elections, as well as in the reconstruction of the DRC;
13. **Decides** to remain seized of the matter.