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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
556th MEETING
10 NOVEMBER 2015
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/BR. (DLVI)

PRESS STATEMENT

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The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), at its 556th meeting held on 10 November 2015, was briefed by the Commission on the evolution of the situation in Guinea-Bissau. Council also received a statement from the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the Commission for Guinea Bissau and Head of the AU Liaison Office in that country, Ambassador Ovidio Manuel Barbosa Pequeno.

Council recalled its previous communiqués and press statements on the situation in Guinea-Bissau, particularly, Press Statement PSC/BR/2.(DXXXIV) adopted at its 534th meeting, held on 17 August 2015 and Press Statement PSC/PR/BR. (DXXI) adopted at its 521st meeting held on 25 June 2015.

Council welcomed the positive developments in the situation in Guinea-Bissau, in particular, the appointment of the new Prime-Minister and the Cabinet. In this regard, Council commended the Bissau-Guinean actors for embracing dialogue and for their respect for the country's constitution, as well as for preserving the rule of law and ensuring non-interference, by the security forces, in the country's political situation.

Council reiterated its deep appreciation to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) for its relentless efforts to find a lasting solution to the current challenges facing Guinea-Bissau. In this context, Council paid tribute to Presidents Macky Sall of Senegal in his capacity as the current Chairperson of ECOWAS, Alpha Condé of the Republic of Guinea in his capacity as Mediator in Guinea Bissau and former President Olusegun Obasanjo in his capacity as the Special Envoy of President Muhammadu Buhari of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, for their commitment in helping the concerned Guinean Bissau political stakeholders to overcome their differences.

Council further expressed appreciation to the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP), the European Union (EU) and the United Nations (UN) for their continued support to the process of ending the crisis in Guinea Bissau. Council commended the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the Commission for Guinea-Bissau, and the UN Special Representative in Guinea-Bissau for their contribution and continued support to the efforts of the Bissau-Guinean actors in addressing the current challenges.

Council welcomed the decision taken by the Extraordinary Session of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Governments held in Dakar on 12 September 2015, to extend the ECOWAS Security Mission in Guinea-Bissau (ECOMIB) mandate until June 2016. Council also welcomed the decision of the EU to provide financial support to this Mission;

Council encouraged the new authorities in Guinea-Bissau and all the Bissau-Guinean stakeholders to work closely together, within the framework of the democratic institutions of the country, to consolidate the important achievements made to date. In this regard, Council

stressed the urgency of sustained action to more effectively address the current challenges facing Guinea-Bissau, including promotion of national reconciliation and good governance, transparent management of the natural resources of the country, respect for human rights, fighting impunity and drug trafficking, defence and security sector reform and socio-economic development in order to ensure long-term stability and wellbeing of the country.

Council reiterated AU's commitment to continue its efforts towards peace building and development, as well as to the democratic dispensation in Guinea Bissau. In this regard, Council urged the political leaders and all the Bissau-Guinean stakeholders to put the interest of the country before any other consideration, as well as to uphold the rule of law and respect the country's constitution.

Council requested the Commission to continue to closely monitor the situation and to provide regular updates to it on the evolution of the situation.

Council agreed to remain seized of the matter.