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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL  
624<sup>TH</sup> MEETING  
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA  
13 SEPTEMBER 2016

PSC/PR/BR.(DCXXIV)

PRESS STATEMENT

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The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 624<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 13 September 2016, received a briefing on the outcome of the 9<sup>th</sup> meeting of the International Contact Group for the Central African Republic (ICG-CAR) that was held on 25 August 2016, in Bangui, in the CAR.

Council took note of the briefings made by the Commission, as well as by the representatives of the CAR and of the European Union.

Council recalled its previous communiqués and press statements on the situation in the CAR, particularly Press Statement PSC/PR/BR.(DCXII) adopted at its 612<sup>th</sup> meeting, held on 28 July 2016.

Council welcomed the outcomes of the 9<sup>th</sup> meeting of the ICG-CAR, including the establishment of the International Support Group for the CAR (ISG-CAR) to assist in mobilizing international support in favour of post-conflict reconstruction and development, as well as peace-building efforts in the CAR.

Council also welcomed the initiative by the AU Commission to convene, as soon as possible, an African Solidarity Conference, in Addis Ababa, with a view to mobilizing support, from within Africa, in support of the CAR. In the same context, Council looked forward to the convening of an international donor's conference, in Brussels, Belgium, in November 2016 and underscored the importance of ensuring that any pledges made at that conference are urgently remitted to the CAR.

In addition to mobilizing international support, Council underlined the importance of assisting the CAR in establishing mechanisms that will ensure that the proceeds from the country's vast natural resources endowment are also utilized in national development efforts, with a view to, not only promoting self-reliance, but also to reducing the risks associated with heavy external donor dependency.

Council underscored importance of an effective disarmament, demobilization and re-integration process, as well as security sector reform in the CAR. In this context, Council welcomed the pledges made by some Member States to provide training for the CAR national defence and security forces in order ensure that they have the necessary capacity to more effectively discharge their republican responsibilities. In this regard, Council emphasized the importance of coordination and coherence of efforts between and among international actors providing support to the CAR, in order to avoid duplications and to ensure complementarity of efforts.

Council commended the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), countries of the region, the United Nations and all concerned international partners for their continued support to the post-conflict

reconstruction efforts in the CAR. In this context, Council stressed the need to ensure that these efforts are aligned with the CAR priorities as outlined in its national development plan.

While taking note of the request made by the representative of the CAR for the lifting of the United Nations arms embargo and sanctions, Council requested the Commission to develop a standard criteria, for its consideration, that will be applicable to all Member States in similar situations, while bearing in mind the peculiar circumstances of each country.

Mindful of the menace that the Lord's Resistance Army (RLA) and other armed and criminal groups continue to pose to peace and security in the CAR and in the region, Council urged MINUSCA to consider the possibility of deploying in the entire country.

Council stressed the importance of remaining vigilant and requested the AU Commission to continue to provide regular updates to Council.

Council agreed to remain seized of the matter.