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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL  
712<sup>TH</sup> MEETING  
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA  
23 AUGUST 2017

PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCXII)

COMMUNIQUÉ

## COMMUNIQUÉ

The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 712<sup>nd</sup> meeting held on 23 August 2017, adopted the following decision on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC):

### **Council,**

1. **Takes note** of the statement delivered by Ambassador Smail Chergui, Commissioner for Peace and Security and the briefings provided by the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the AU Commission and Head of the AU Liaison Office in the DRC, Ambassador Abdou Abarry, and the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), Mr Mamadou Diallo, on the political, security, humanitarian situation and the electoral process in the DRC. Council **also takes note** of the statements made by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration of the DRC, H.E. Leonardo She Okitundu, South Africa, in its capacity as Chairperson of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), Senegal, in its capacity as an African Member of the UN Security Council (A3) and by the European Union (EU);
2. **Recalls** its previous communiqués and press statements on the situation in the DRC, including Communiqué PSC/PR/COMM. (DCLXXI) adopted at its 671<sup>st</sup> meeting held on 27 March 2017;
3. **Expresses its serious concern about** the continuing violence and insecurity in the eastern and central parts of the country and in the Kasai provinces, including escapes by prisoners from jail, which increases insecurity in the urban centres, particularly in Kinshasa. To this end, Council **requests** the authorities of the DRC to continue to cooperate with the international experts in charge of investigating serious human rights violations and other killings in Kasai so that perpetrators be brought before the courts. Council **urges** the Government of the DRC to encourage a negotiated approach to all the actors concerned in the search for a lasting solution to the crisis in Kasai;
4. **Welcomes** the announcement by the AU Commission about the convening in the DRC, on 19 October 2017, of a Regional Summit of the Guarantors of the Framework Agreement for Peace, Security and Cooperation for the DRC and the Region, signed in Addis Ababa, on 24 February 2013. In this regard, Council **appeals** to the international community to assist in the relocation of the cantoned former M23 elements to a third country;

5. **Further expresses its concern about** the worsening humanitarian situation in several areas in the DRC and **appeals** to the international community to provide the necessary support, in order to meet the needs of millions of internally displaced persons and refugees;
6. **Reiterates the importance** it attaches to ensuring that the downsizing of MONUSCO does not undermine the expected effectiveness in the implementation of its mandate in the DRC. In this regard, Council **commends** the excellent partnership that exists between the United Nations (UN) and the AU for the resolution of the crisis in the DRC and **encourages** the continuation of the cooperation between the Forces of MONUSCO and the Armed Forces of the DRC (FARDC) in order to address effectively the security challenges facing the DRC;
7. **Reaffirms its commitment** to the full implementation of the Political Agreement of 31 December 2016. In this regard, Council **takes note** of the appointment, on 7 April 2017, of Mr. Bruno Tshibala as Prime Minister of the Government of National Unity and the appointment, on 22 July 2017, of Mr Joseph Olenghankoy as Chairman of the National Monitoring Council of the Agreement (CNSA), as they complete the establishment of the institutional framework for the political transition as provided for in the Agreement of 31 December 2016. In this perspective, Council **calls upon** all the political and social stakeholders in the DRC, to support this institutional process with a view to ensuring a successful political transition and establishment of conditions conducive for the organization of free, fair and credible elections;
8. **Congratulates** the Government of the DRC on its efforts to implement the Political Agreement of 31 December 2016 and for maintaining constant dialogue with all the political and social stakeholders in the DRC, in order to overcome the remaining divergences. In this regard, Council underlines that the unilateral decisions to impose sanctions on personalities in the DRC would not provide the environment conducive for the resolution of the crisis in the DRC;
9. **Notes with satisfaction** the progress made by the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) in the registration of close to 98 percent of eligible voters and **welcomes** the logistical support provided by the MONUSCO in the conduct of this operation. Council **encourages** the CENI to intensify its efforts to cover all the provinces of the country, particularly in Kasai, and **stresses**, to this end, the need for the international community to provide the CENI with the necessary resources to enable it to complete the electoral processes;
10. **Urges** the CENI, in consultation with the CNSA and the Government, to objectively assess the entire electoral process in order to publish, as soon as possible, the electoral calendar;

11. **Commends** the efforts made by regional organisations, particularly the SADC, to defuse tensions in the DRC and to promote an inclusive dialogue for the implementation of the Political Agreement of 31 December 2016, and **welcomes** the decisions of the 37<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Summit of the Heads of State and Government of SADC recently held in Pretoria, South Africa from 19 to 20 August 2017 on the situation in the DRC as outlined from paragraph 23 to 28 of its Communiqué, which amongst others, noted a number of challenges that have made it unrealistic for the DRC to hold elections in December 2017 as originally planned and urged the CENI to publicise the revised electoral calendar; urged all stakeholders to refrain from actions that would undermine the political and security stability with regard to developments, which led to the escalation of violence and insecurity in the Kasai Provinces; approved the appointment of a Special Envoy to the DRC; commended President Joseph Kabange Kabila, the Government of the DRC and other stakeholders for the progress made in implementing provisions of the December 31 2016 Peace Agreement; and condemned the extra-continental interferences in AU Member States affairs, in particular, the unilateral practice of targeted sanctions against Congolese personalities by non-African organisations and countries.

12. **Requests** the Chairperson of the Commission to take the necessary measures to dispatch a pre-electoral and security situation assessment mission to the DRC, as soon as possible, with the participation of representatives of Regional organisations, such as the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), the SADC and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and to report back to Council. In this regard, Council **stresses** the need to strengthen the political role of the AU in the search for a solution to the crisis in the DRC as well as for the Chairperson of the Commission to enhance human resources required in the AU Liaison Office in the DRC;

13. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.