

AFRICAN UNION

الاتحاد الأفريقي



UNION AFRICAINE

UNIÃO AFRICANA

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, P.O. Box: 3243 Tel.: (251-11) 551 38 22 Fax: (251-11) 551 93 21

Email: situationroom@africa-union.org

PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL

730TH MEETING

ADDIS ABABA

7 NOVEMBER 2017

PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCXXX)

COMMUNIQUE

COMMUNIQUE

The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), at its 730th meeting, held on 7 November 2017, considered the Report of its field mission to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), undertaken from 22 to 26 October 2017 and adopted the following decision:

Council,

1. **Adopts** the Report of its field mission to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), which was undertaken from 22 to 26 October 2017;
2. **Recalls** its previous communiqués and press statements on the situation in the DRC. Council **further recalls** the Agreements signed by Congolese stakeholders on 18 October 2016 and on 31 December 2016, respectively, on the organisation of peaceful, credible and transparent elections in the DRC, in order to pave the way for a peaceful solution to the political crisis in the country;
3. **Takes note** of the efforts being made by all the actors concerned, in particular the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), to complete, as soon as possible, the voter registration exercise, despite the financial and logistical challenges being faced;
4. **Endorses** the Statement issued by the Chairperson of the AU Commission on the publication of the electoral calendar in the Democratic Republic of Congo;
5. **Welcomes** the publication by the INEC of the electoral calendar, which sets 23 December 2018, as the date for the holding of presidential, legislative and provincial elections in the DRC;
6. **Encourages** the DRC authorities and all other Congolese political and social actors to work resolutely towards reaching a broad consensus that makes it possible to organise free, fair, credible and peaceful elections, in accordance with the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance;
7. **Calls upon** all the political and social actors to exercise utmost restraint and favour dialogue as the only viable option for building the required consensus around the scrupulous respect for and successful implementation of the new electoral calendar. Council **urges** the Congolese authorities to enhance the confidence-building measures, with a view to establishing the conducive conditions for the organisation of elections within the framework of the electoral calendar, as announced on 5 November 2017;
8. **Further calls upon** the DRC Government to submit, as soon as possible, to the National Assembly and to the Senate, the texts of legislation on the organisation of elections, immediately after the completion of the voter registration exercise;
9. **Reiterates** the commitment of the AU to support the electoral process in the DRC. In this context, Council **encourages** the Government to initiate discussions with partners willing to provide financial, logistical and technical support to the electoral process in the DRC, in order to ensure successful organization of elections. In this regard, Council **also urges** AU Member States, as well as bilateral and multilateral partners, to provide the necessary support to the DRC for the successful completion of the electoral process, which will culminate in the holding of free, fair, credible and peaceful elections;

10. **Reaffirms** the lead role of the AU, in close cooperation with the countries of the region, the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), in the search for a solution to the political situation obtaining in the DRC. To the same end, Council **requests** the Chairperson of the Commission to establish a coordination mechanism, which could include the AU, the countries of the region, SADC, ICGLR, ECCAS, the United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU), with a view to ensuring the provision of an effective and coherent support to the DRC;

11. **Reiterates** its deep concern about the prevailing security and humanitarian situation in eastern DRC, with the continuation of abuses and human rights violations against the civilian population, by the militia and other various armed groups. In this regard, Council **reaffirms** its commitment to ensure the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC and the Region, signed on 24 February 2013, in Addis Ababa. Council **calls upon** the stakeholders and the Guarantors of the said Framework to take the necessary steps and redouble their efforts, in order to ensure effective implementation of all aspects of the Framework, particularly with regard to efforts aimed at neutralising all negative forces and armed groups operating in eastern DRC;

12. **Takes note** of the relative improvement in the security and humanitarian situation in the Kasai provinces, which enabled the launching of the voter registration process. In this context, Council **appeals** to the international community to provide the necessary support and humanitarian assistance to the affected populations of Kasai, particularly the Internally Displaced Persons, including women and children;

13. **Reiterates** its support for the United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Congo (MONUSCO) for its tireless efforts to promote peace, security and stability in the DRC, despite the challenges related to the reduction of its personnel and logistics and **urges** it to continue to support the authorities and institutions of the DRC, notably with regard to the successful organization of elections in the country;

14. **Congratulates** the Ambassador of Burundi, Chairperson of the PSC for the month of October 2017, for the exemplary manner in which he led the PSC delegation during the field mission. Council **also congratulates** the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the AU Commission and Head of the Liaison Office in Kinshasa, Ambassador Abdou Abarry, for having facilitated the smooth conduct of the mission;

15. **Expresses deep gratitude** to the Government and people of the DRC for the warm welcome, hospitality and good working conditions that enabled Council to successfully conduct the field mission. Council **also thanks** MONUSCO for the invaluable logistical support extended to the PSC field mission, particularly for facilitating the visit by the Delegation to Kananga, in Central Kasai Province;

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