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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
738TH MEETING

7 DECEMBER 2017
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCXXXVIII)

COMMUNIQUE

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The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), at its 738th meeting held on 7 December 2017, considered the renewal of the mandate of the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF) against the Boko Haram terrorist group and adopted the following decision:

Council,

1. **Takes note** of the opening statement made by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Congo, Ambassador Lazare Makayat Safouesse, in his capacity as Chairperson of the PSC for the month of December 2017. Council **also takes note** of the report of the Chairperson of the Commission and the briefing made by the Force Commander of MNJTF, Major General Irabor Lucky Eluonye. Council **further takes note** of the statements made by the representatives of Benin, Chad, Gabon, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal, as well as by the representatives of the European Union (EU) and the United Nations (UN);
2. **Recalls** its earlier decisions and pronouncements on the activities of the Boko Haram terrorist group and efforts aimed at neutralizing it, in particular Communiqué [PSC/AHG/COMM. 2(CDLXXXIV)] adopted at its 484th meeting held on 29 January 2015, at the level of Heads of State and Government and Communiqué [PSC/PR/2. (DCXXXIX)] adopted at its 639th meeting held on 29 November 2016 by which Council authorized the deployment of the MNJTF and renewed its mandate till 31 January 2018 respectively. Council **also recalls** Press Statements [PSC/PR/BR. (DCCII)] and [PSC/PR/BR. (DCLXXX)] adopted at its 702nd and 680th meeting held on 19 July 2017 and 18 April 2017 respectively, as well as Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM. (DCCXXI)] on the Report of the PSC field mission to the countries of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) conducted from 27 to 31 July 2017 and Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCXXXIII)] adopted at its 733rd meeting held on 13 November 2017;
3. **Welcomes** the efforts and significant progress made by the MNJTF and the Member States of LCBC plus Benin in the fight against the Boko Haram terrorist group, which have significantly weakened the capability of the terrorist group and continued to successfully dislodge it from its strongholds. However, Council **emphasizes that**, despite the achievements made by MNJTF, Boko Haram still remains a serious threat for the countries of the region;
4. **Pays tribute** to the gallant soldiers who have paid the ultimate price on the line of duty and expresses its heartfelt condolences to their families and respective countries of origin. Council **encourages** MNJTF Forces to remain resolute until the Boko Haram terrorist group is completely defeated;
5. **Strongly condemns** the continued attacks and abuses perpetrated by the Boko Haram terrorist group against innocent civilians which have resulted in massive displacement of the population and caused a serious humanitarian crisis in the region. In this regard, Council **calls**

on LCBC member countries and Benin to protect and resettle the displaced population and re-integrate the surrendering Boko Haram elements and their families;

6. **Commends** the AU partners for their continued support to the MNJTF, in particular, the EU, the United Kingdom and Turkey, and **urges** them to redouble their support and to ensure timely disbursement of pledged support. In addition, Council **stresses the importance** of ensuring that the support provided is in line with the priority needs and objectives of the MNJTF. In this regard, Council **requests** the UN to authorize the United Nations Office Projects Support (UNOPS) to respond positively to the AU's request for provision for support to MNJTF, in order to allow for the utilization of the remaining EU funds contributed to the MNJTF;

7. **Stresses the imperative need** for the troop contributing countries of the MNJTF to sustain their offensive operations against the Boko Haram terrorist group, with a view to completely eliminating the threat it continues to pose. In this context, Council **decides** to renew the mandate of the MNJTF for another period of twelve (12) months, effective from 31 January 2018;

8. **Welcomes** the outcomes of the first Regional Stabilization Strategy Conference for the LCBC countries affected by the Boko Haram that was held in N'Djamena, Chad, from 2-4 November 2017 and **looks forward** to the implementation of and necessary follow-up on the recommendations and commitments made by the affected countries and Partners at the conference. In this regard, Council **urges** the Commission to continue supporting the holistic approach of the Regional Stabilization and Recovery Strategy;

9. **Requests** the Commission to make efforts towards mobilizing additional and adequate support for the MNJTF, in order to fill its capability gaps, particularly, Amphibious Equipment, Counter-Improvised Explosive Devices (C-IED) equipment, ground and air lift assets, intelligence gathering platforms. Council **also requests** the Commission, working in close coordination with the countries of the region, to mobilize necessary resources for quick impact and peace strengthening projects, with a view to winning the hearts and minds of the population and isolating and defeating the terrorist group;

10. **Requests** the Commission, in coordination with the LCBC Secretariat, to continue to regularly update Council, in line with the relevant provisions contained in the Communiqué PSC/AHG/ COMM.2(CDLXXXIV) of 29 January 2015;

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