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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, P.O. Box: 3243 Tel.: (251-11) 5513 822 Fax: (251-11) 5519 321  
Email: [situationroom@africa-union.org](mailto:situationroom@africa-union.org)

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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL

862<sup>ND</sup> MEETING

23 JULY 2019

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCCLXII)

COMMUNIQUE

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**Adopted by the Peace and Security Council (PSC) at its 862<sup>nd</sup> meeting held on 23 July 2019, on the outbreak of Ebola in the Eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC),**

The Peace and Security Council,

***Recalling*** the relevant provisions of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, in particular, Articles 6(f) and 7(p) relating to aspects of the mandate of the PSC with regard to humanitarian action and disaster management;

***Noting*** the remarks by H.E. Mrs. Amira ElFadil, Commissioner for Social Affairs and the presentation by Dr. John Nkengasong, Director of the Center for Disease Control (Africa CDC) of the African Union on the outbreak of the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) in the DRC;

***Also noting, with grave concern,*** that the EVD outbreak in the DRC is the second worst outbreak since the 2014-2016 Ebola outbreak in West Africa

***Expressing grave concern*** over the Ebola virus outbreak in the DRC, in particular the risk of spilling over to other parts of the country and other countries of the region,

***Noting that,*** on 17 July 2019, the EVD outbreak in the DRC has been declared by the World Health Organization (WHO) as a public health emergency of international concern;

***Further noting*** the Joint Press release of the Africa CDC and the World Health Organization (WHO) of 19 July 2019, expressing gratitude to all AU Member States for the close collaboration with and support to the EVD outbreak response;

***Expressing*** solidarity to the Government and people of the DRC, and ***reaffirming*** its commitment and readiness to continue supporting the DRC in eliminating and controlling the spreading of the EVD.

**Acting under Article 7 of its Protocol, the Peace and Security Council:**

1. ***Underscores*** that the outbreak of EVD in the DRC is a source of grave concern, as well as a serious threat to peace and security in DRC, the region and the continent as a whole, and ***emphasizes the need*** for urgent measures to be taken to control the disease and eliminate its spreading to other parts of the country or neighboring countries;
2. ***Strongly condemns*** the attacks against public health centres and health workers in the eastern part of the DRC and ***urges*** all armed groups in Eastern DRC to observe an immediate ceasefire to allow public health workers to fulfill their mandate, consisting in saving lives of innocent civilians; ***Further urges*** the Government of DRC, in close cooperation with the AU and the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) to provide the necessary protection to the health workers and public health centers;

3. **Recognizes** the seriousness of the security implications of the current Ebola outbreak, **noting with deep concern** that three of affected the most affected areas of the Eastern part of the country are experiencing security challenges; **stresses** that the Ebola outbreak has the potential to undermine the tremendous progress made in the region; In this respect, Council **calls** for joint renewed efforts, both within Africa and from partners to combat the epidemic;
4. **Underscores** the need to develop, in close cooperation with the Government of DRC, local authorities and all relevant partners, an awareness and confidence building measures campaign with the Ebola-affected communities, with a view to secure their cooperation in efforts aimed at fighting the EVD;
5. **Commends** the Government of the DRC, the AU Commission and the WHO for the steps already taken in dealing with the Ebola outbreak, and **welcomes** the readiness and commitment of AU partners to support African efforts to this effect;
6. **Decides**, given the emergency situation caused by the Ebola outbreak, to authorize the immediate deployment of an AU Mission Against Ebola in DRC (MAEC), comprising medical doctors, laboratory experts, epidemiologists, nurses and other medical and paramedical personnel, as well as security personnel, as required for the protection of the Mission and treatment centers, in close coordination with the relevant DRC authorities and MONUSCO;
7. **Requests** the Commission, in close cooperation with the Government of the DRC, the WHO and MONUSCO, as well as the relevant partners and stakeholders to take, without further delay, the necessary steps to develop a Concept of Operations for the AU Mission authorized in paragraph 4 above, including its logistical, security, financial and other relevant aspects; Further **requests** the Chairperson of the AU Commission to undertake consultations on ways and means to ensure predictable and sustainable funding for health emergency situations in Africa and make proposals to the PSC;
8. **Appeals** to all neighboring countries to take necessary measures and precautions to control the spreading of the EVD and build awareness among the societies on precaution measures to be taken; Further **appeals** to all Member States not to close its borders or place any restriction on travel and cross-border trade;
9. **Encourages** all AU Member States, private sectors and the international community as a whole, to extend the necessary financial and technical support to the deployment of the AU Mission against Ebola outbreak in the DRC;
10. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.