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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL

678<sup>TH</sup> MEETING

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

11 APRIL 2017

PSC/PR/COMM.(DCLXXVIII)

COMMUNIQUE

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The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), at its 678<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 11 April 2017, received a briefing on the prevention of hate crimes and the ideology of genocide in Africa and adopted the following decision:

#### **Council:**

1. **Takes note** of the briefings made by the Director of the Department of Political Affairs at the AU Commission, Dr. Khabele Matlosa and by the Executive Secretary of the Rwanda National Commission for the Fight Against Genocide, Dr. Bizimana Jean Damascene. Council **also takes note** of the statements made by the representatives of Ethiopia, in its capacity as an African Member of the United Nations Security Council, the United States of America, the European Union and the United Nations ;
2. **Recalls** the horror of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda and **reiterates** its commitment to prevent the recurrence of similar mass atrocities, hate crime and ideologies of genocides throughout the African continent. In this context, Council **underlines the imperative of** early and appropriate responses to credible early warning signs of situations that, if not addressed in a timely and effective manner, could lead to potential genocides. In the same context, Council **also underlines the importance** of use of clear analysis and proper terminology in order to avoid falling into the problem of denials;
3. **Also recalls** all international and African instruments on the prevention of genocide, including the 1948 United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide, the 1981 African Charter on Human and People's Rights, the AU Constitutive Act, the 2006 AU Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development Policy Framework and the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2150 (2014). Council **further recalls** Assembly decision Assembly/AU/Dec.501 (XXII), in which the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government declared 2014-2024 as the Madiba Nelson Mandela Decade of Reconciliation. In the same context, Council **also recalls** the 2000 Report of the International Panel of Eminent Personalities that was appointed by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity to investigate the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda and the surrounding events, which provides a framework of principles, strategies and policies, that, if followed, could create conditions in which genocide will become both, unthinkable and impossible to organize;
4. **Acknowledges** that deliberate tendencies of discrimination, marginalization, tribalism and manipulation of ethnicity often create conducive conditions for hate crimes and ideologies of genocide to thrive. In this regard, Council **urges** Member States, which have not yet done so, to establish necessary legal frameworks, in order to prevent violent conflicts, discrimination, hate crimes and genocide. Council **also urges** Member States to establish effective national

infrastructures for peace as part of efforts to prevent mass atrocities. Council further **urges** Member States to address all root causes of hate crimes and ideologies of genocide;

5. **Recognizes** that, in the African traditional and cultural settings, most families keep various types of household tools, including spears and machettes, for peaceful use. However, Council **deplores and strongly condemns** the diversion of use of these household tools to commit organized and systematic violence against particular sections of societies, including genocidal acts;

6. **Stresses the importance** of promoting civic awareness, consciousness and the culture of peace as well as in preventing hate crimes and genocide. Council **also stresses the need for** deepening democracy, participatory and inclusive governance which is premised on national dialogue, consensus and, as much as possible, power sharing. In this context, Council re-affirms **the importance** of working towards an equitable and inclusive socio-economic development, as well as long-term structural transformation aimed at improving the livelihoods of the people;

7. **Welcomes** the efforts by those Member States, which are investigating and prosecuting individuals who were involved in the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda and **calls upon** all the other Member States, which have not yet done so, to also investigate, arrest, prosecute or extradite the genocide fugitives currently residing in their territories, including the leaders of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR). In the same context, Council **condemns** denial and distortion of facts relating to the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda;

8. **Acknowledges the important role** that the media can play in efforts aimed at promoting social cohesion and nation-building, as well as peace and stability in Member States and **stresses the need** for responsible and balanced media reporting;

9. **Decides** to convene, annually in April, a PSC open meeting on hate crimes and fighting genocide ideology in Africa; and

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