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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
747TH MEETING
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA
18 JANUARY 2018

PSC/PR/COMM. (DCCXLVII)

COMMUNIQUE

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The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), at its 747th meeting held on 18 January 2018, received a briefing on the elections conducted in Africa during the last quarter of 2017 and those to be conducted in the first quarter of 2018, within the context of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG), and adopted the following decision:

Council:

1. **Takes note** of the briefing made by the AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, H.E. Mrs. Minata Samate Cessouma on the three elections conducted during the last quarter of 2017, namely, in Kenya, Liberia and Equatorial Guinea. Council **also takes note** of the briefings on the post-election assessment mission in the Gambia, as well as on elections to be organized in the first quarter of 2018;
2. **Further takes note** of the following key emerging issues stemming from the elections conducted during the last quarter of 2017:
 - a) There has been a growing public (voters) and stakeholders (political parties) confidence in both the electoral commissions and the judiciary when it comes to ensuring that electoral processes are firmly predicated upon rule of law and constitutionalism;
 - b) The need to enhance the African Union Election Observation methodology, reporting and coordination mechanisms with other relevant international missions; and
 - c) The historic nature of the elections in Liberia is worth emphasizing. The election and its outcome presented a golden opportunity for this post-conflict country to further consolidate its peace and political stability gains, both of which are a pre-requisite for socio-economic development;
3. **Acknowledges** the critical role of credible elections in peacebuilding and democratic consolidation, mindful that shortcomings, irregularities and malpractices in electoral processes are driving factors in election-related violence in Africa. In this respect, Council **underscores the need** for Member States to always ensure the credibility of electoral processes, as well as legitimacy of their outcome, and **urges** them to continuously enhance the capacities of their judiciary and the National Election Management Bodies (EMBs), with a view to enable them to more effectively deal with election-related disputes;
4. **Also underscores the importance** of enhancing the capacity and the credibility of AU Election Observation Missions (AUEOMs). In this regard, Council **requests** the Commission to review the AU election observation methodology. Council **further requests** the Commission to always ensure that the core team of AU election experts and analysts remains in the countries organizing elections right up to the end of the electoral process, in order to provide technical support as may be required;

5. **Underlines the need** for the AUEOMs to always include in their final reports, any cases of election malpractices and shortcomings with a view to drawing lessons for the future;
6. **Encourages** Member States to continue to ensure peaceful political transitions through the organization of credible and peaceful elections, particularly in countries emerging from protracted violent conflict situations;
7. **Congratulates** all Member States which have successfully conducted peaceful elections and **encourages** those that are yet to organize their own elections, to emulate the best practices already observed in other Member States;
8. **Urges** all Member States planning to organize elections in the first quarter of 2018 to undertake to ensure the credibility and legitimacy of their outcomes, among others, through effective and transparent voter registrations exercises, civic education on inclusivity, diversity management, tolerance and culture of peace, as well as on the importance of using legal channels to address cases of election-related grievances;
9. **Decides** to remain actively seized of elections on the continent.