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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, P.O. Box: 3243 Tel.: (251-11) 551 7700 Fax: (251-11) 5519 321  
Email: [situationroom@africa-union.org](mailto:situationroom@africa-union.org)

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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL  
795<sup>TH</sup> MEETING  
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA  
20 SEPTEMBER 2018

PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCXCV)

COMMUNIQUE

## COMMUNIQUE

The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), at its 795<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 20 September 2018, in Addis Ababa, adopted the following decision on the African Standby Force (ASF):

### **Council:**

1. **Takes note** of the briefing made by the Acting Director of the Peace and Security Department, Dr. Admore Mupoki Kambudzi, on behalf of the Commissioner for Peace and Security, Amb. Smail Chergui, on the harmonization of the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises (ACIRC) activities within the African Standby Force (ASF);
2. **Recalls** its previous communiques and press statements on the ASF, particularly, Press Statement [PSC/PR/BR.(DCLVII)] adopted at its 657<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 9 February 2017, Communique [PSC/PR/COMM. (DCCV)] adopted at its 705<sup>th</sup> Meeting held on 25 April 2017, and Communique PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCLXVII) adopted at 767<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 25 April 2018, on the ASF and the ACIRC. Council **also recalls** Assembly Decision [Assembly/AU/Dec.679(XXX)], which called on all stakeholders to support the realization of the full operationalization of the ASF, and harmonization of the activities of ACIRC with the Framework of the ASF and enhance cooperation with all ad-hoc coalitions namely, the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) against Boko Haram terrorist group, Group of Five Sahel Joint Force and the Regional Cooperation Initiative against the Lord's Resistance Army (RCI-LRA), and requested the Commission to submit a plan on the harmonization of ACIRC into ASF, including steps to be taken by the AU and the Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention (RECs/RMs) to coordinate ad-hoc coalitions, within the context of Articles 13 and 16 of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union;
3. **Further recalls** Assembly Decision [Assembly/AU/Dec.589(XXVI)], in which the Assembly commended the progress made by the East African Standby Force (EASF), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in operationalizing their respective standby forces and acknowledged the efforts of the North Africa Regional Capability (NARC) towards operationalizing its standby force;
4. **Emphasizes, once again, the need** for the Commission to expedite the process of harmonization of ACIRC within the ASF, in full compliance with the letter and spirit of Assembly Decisions 679 and 695. In this respect, Council **stresses the imperative** for the Commission to exclusively devote all available resources for ASF to activities of ASF and those aimed at expediting the harmonization process. In this respect, Council **reiterates the importance** for the RECs/RMs to fully participate in this exercise, taking into account the successful deployment, within the Framework of ASF, in Lesotho (SAPMIL) by the SADC, in the Gambia (ECOMIG) and in Guinea Bissau (ECOMIB) by the ECOWAS.

5. **Decides** that, in order to accelerate the harmonization process, the Commission should urgently organize a meeting of the PSC Military Staff Committee, with the facilitation of the Peace and Security Department, to identify and propose ways and means of fully implementing Assembly Decisions 679 and 695 and to make appropriate recommendations, including timelines and roadmap, to guide the PSC on how to overcome the challenges facing the harmonization of the ACIRC within the ASF;
6. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.