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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
891ST MEETING

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA
5 NOVEMBER 2019

PSC/PR/BR.(DCCCXCI)

PRESS STATEMENT

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The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), dedicated its 891st meeting held on 5 November 2019, to an Open Session on the theme: “Living Together in Peace” in commemoration of Resolution A/RES/72/130 adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 8 December 2017, declaring 16 May as the International Day of Living Together in Peace.

Council took note of the opening statements made by the Permanent Representative of the People’s Democratic Republic of Algeria, H.E Ambassador Rachid Benlounes, in his capacity as the PSC Chairperson for the month of November 2019 and by the Commissioner for Peace and Security, H.E. Ambassador Smail Chergui, read on his behalf by the Director for Peace and Security Dr. Admore Mupoki Kambudzi. Council also took note of the message from the Director General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Council (UNESCO), Ms. Audrey Azoulay, read on her behalf by the UNESCO Officer in Charge, Mr. Albert Mendy, as UNESCO is in charge of the implementation of Resolution A/RES/72/130. Council further took note of the statements made by the representatives of AU Member States and by the representative of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), as well as by the representatives of AU partners, other institutions and organizations;

Council recalled the AU vision of an integrated, peaceful and prosperous Continent; the OAU/AU 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration in which the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government pledged not to bequeath the burden of conflicts to the next generation of Africans and undertook to end all wars in Africa by the year 2020; the AU Master Roadmap of Practical Steps for Silencing the Guns in Africa by the Year 2020; Agenda 2063 Aspiration 4; 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development Goals; as well as Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCCLXXXIII)] adopted at its 883rd meeting held at ministerial level held on 27 September 2019, in New York on the interdependence between peace, security and development.

Council commended the efforts of Algeria, on the basis of its national experience in de-radicalization and the fight against extremism, which eventually culminated in the adoption by the General Assembly of Resolution A/RES/72/130 declaring 16 May as International Day of Living Together in Peace.

Council expressed deep concern over the rising trend of religious, ethnic and cultural intolerance, radicalization and extremism, the ideology of hate, hate speech, ethnic conflicts and all forms of discrimination. In this regard, Council underscored the importance of solidarity, respect for cultural diversity, inter-faith dialogue and inclusive societies, as well as the important role that education can play in contributing towards promoting understanding, the culture of

peace and tolerance and stressed the need for national education policies to include peace education and tolerance of diversity.

Council stressed the importance of national reconciliation, transitional justice and inclusive dialogue in preventing relapses and in fostering post-conflict peace building.

Council also acknowledged the importance of participatory and inclusive governance in contributing towards promoting a national culture of peace. In this regard, Council emphasized the role of the State in adopting holistic and multi-dimensional approach, with a view to ensuring that people live together in peace and encouraged Member States to redouble their efforts in creating conducive conditions for sustainable peace, as well as to fully adhere to international human rights principles and standards. Council recalled the AU principles as enshrined in the Constitutive Act, particularly, Articles (3) and (4), which stipulate the respect for good neighborliness, territorial integrity, national sovereignty, non-interference in internal affairs of each other, peaceful resolution of conflicts and peaceful coexistence and promoting the culture of living together in peace at the local, national, regional and international levels.

Council emphasized the important role of political, traditional, community and religious leaders in promoting the culture of peace in the society. In this regard, Council stressed the need for respect for cultural, ethnic and religious diversity, including respect for traditional and customary values, as well as to promote solidarity at all levels of society, and more tolerant and moderate religious discourses. Council further stressed the need for collective efforts in building resilience and combating all forms of extremism, radicalization and terrorism.

Council underlined the important role of professional and ethical media, as well as civil society organizations, in promoting the culture of peace, among others through educating and encouraging people to live together in peace. Council noted with concern the growing trend of fake news and encouraged the media fraternity to always be professional and ethical.

Council underscored the importance of addressing all fundamental root causes of conflicts and of inclusive growth and development policies, including governance deficits such as poverty, inequalities, exclusion, marginalization, as well as mismanagement of ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity.

Council acknowledged that unequal distribution of proceeds from the national resources, particularly mineral resources, is one of the root causes of violent conflicts, particularly in mineral resources-rich parts of Africa. In this context, Council underlined the importance of equitable sharing of the proceeds from natural resources.

Council recalled Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM. (DCCCLXXXIII)] adopted at its 883rd meeting held at ministerial level on 27 September 2019 in New York, on the Margins of 74th United Nations General Assembly Session and reiterated the interdependence between peace, security and development and highlighted that peace is a fundamental pre-condition for development. Council also emphasized the interconnection between the culture of peace with social justice and non-violence.

Council emphasized the importance of promoting living together in peace through regional integration and free movement of people. In this context, Council encouraged all Member States which have not yet done so, to sign and ratify the African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement, as well as the Protocol on Free Movement of People.

Council acknowledged the important role that women and youth can play in promoting the culture of living together in peace and in this regard, stressed need for Member States to develop policies aimed at empowering women and youth, as well as to ensure their active participation in decision-making and peace processes. In this context, Council welcomed the establishment of the Global Alliance of Women Mediators announced by the United Nations during the 74th UN General Assembly Session in September 2019.

Council underlined the need for Member States to devote more resources and attention on developing their national early warning and conflict prevention capacities, as well as to ensure early and appropriate responses, which do not result in divided societies.

Council encouraged Member States to promote national reconciliation and redouble their efforts in building cohesive societies. In this regard, Council welcomed the decision by the Republic of Angola to host the upcoming PSC Ministerial level meeting on National Reconciliation, Restoration of Peace and Security and Rebuilding of national cohesion to be held on 5 December 2019, in Luanda. Council also welcomed the efforts by the Kingdom of Morocco, which will host the next United Nations Global Forum for Alliance of Civilizations, in 2020, and looked forward to the outcomes of the PSC Ministerial meeting and that of the UN Global Forum, which are expected to contribute significantly to the promotion of the culture of living together in peace in Africa.

Council affirmed its full support to the efforts being deployed by the AU High Representative for Silencing the Guns, H.E. Ambassador Ramtane Lamamra.

Council agreed to dedicate an annual open session to commemorate the International Day of Living Together in Peace, as forum for continuously raising public awareness, as well as taking stock of efforts being deployed by Member States in upholding Resolution A/RES/72/130.

Council agreed to remain seized of the matter.