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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL

993RD MEETING

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

27 APRIL 2021

PSC/PR/COMM.3(CMXCIII)

COMMUNIQUE

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Adopted by the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), at its 993rd meeting, held on 27 April 2021, on the AU Human Rights Observers and Military Experts Mission in Burundi.

The Peace and Security Council,

Noting the opening remarks made by the PSC Chairperson for April 2021 and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Djibouti to the AU, H.E. Ambassador Mohammed Idriss Farah and the AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, H.E. Ambassador Bankole Adeoye; **also noting** the presentation made by the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the Chairperson of the Commission for the Great Lakes Region and Head of the AU Liaison Office in Bujumbura, H.E. Ambassador Basil Ikouebe, as well as the statement made by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Burundi to the AU, H.E. Ambassador Joel Nkurabagaya;

Recalling Assembly Decision [Assembly/AU /Dec.695(XXXI)] adopted by the 31st Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government, held from 1 to 2 July 2018; **also recalling** all pronouncements and decisions of Council on the situation in Burundi, particularly, Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.(DLI)] adopted at its 551st meeting held on 17 October 2015; Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.2(DXV)] adopted at its 515th meeting held on 13 June 2015; Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.(DXXIII)] adopted at its 523rd meeting held on 9 July 2015; and Press Statement [PSC/BR/PR.(DXXXI)] adopted at its 531st meeting held on 6 August 2015, as well as the various press releases issued by the Chairperson of the Commission on the situation in Burundi;

Re-affirming its commitment to respect the sovereignty, national unity and territorial integrity of the Republic of Burundi; and

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

1. **Welcomes** the significant progress in the political and security situation in the Burundi since the outbreak of the crisis in 2015, and in this regard, **commends** the Government, particularly, the leadership and the people of Burundi for the successful organization of elections on 20 May 2020, and subsequent formation of a new Government headed by H.E. Évariste Ndayishimiye, President of the Republic of Burundi;
2. **Also welcomes** the improved relations between Burundi and its neighbours, as well as with the European Union and other bilateral and multilateral partners;
3. **Encourages** the Burundian stakeholders to preserve the gains achieved since the peaceful transition, and **calls on** all parties to embrace the spirit of political tolerance to foster national cohesion and reconciliation;

4. **Commends** the Human Rights Observers and the Military Experts deployed by the AU, for their sacrifices, dedication and commitment to duty, including particularly for providing capacity training support to the Burundian judiciary, law enforcement agencies, women and youth groups, as well as the provision of legal assistance to some detainees;
5. **Expresses appreciation** to the Government and people of Burundi for hosting the AU Human Rights Observers and Military Experts Mission and for facilitating its work;
6. **Also expresses profound appreciation** to the countries of the Great Lakes region for hosting Burundian refugees, including Tanzania, Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda; and **welcomes** the gradual return of Burundian refugees to their home country;
7. **While noting with gratitude** the financial, technical and material support to the Government of Burundi from some members of the international community; **underscores the importance** of sustained international support and therefore, **encourages** other members of the international community, who have not yet done so, to immediately lift all sanctions and other forms of punitive measures imposed against Burundi without further delay, with a view to creating conducive conditions for sustainable socio-economic recovery and stabilization;
8. **Also commends** the efforts deployed by the AU Liaison Office in Bujumbura, in supporting the work of the AU Human Rights Observers and Military Experts Mission in Burundi and **requests** the Chairperson of the Commission to avail to the Liaison Office with all necessary resources, with a view to enabling it to more effectively discharge its mandate;
9. **Underlines the need** for the AU Commission, through the Centre for Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development, in Cairo, to provide the required support in line with the post-conflict reconstruction and development, as well as peacebuilding and socio-economic needs and priorities of the Government of Burundi;
10. **Decides**, in light of the significant progress achieved and positive developments being witnessed in Burundi, to end the mandate of the AU Human Rights Observers and Military Experts Mission in Burundi on 31 May 2021, in line with the AU administrative rules and regulations, as well as to remove Burundi from the agenda of the Council;
11. **Affirms** the commitment of the AU to continue to accompany the Government of Burundi in its relentless efforts to deepen and consolidate democracy and to build durable peace and stability;
12. **Requests** the Chairperson of the Commission to deploy a technical impact assessment team to Burundi with a mandate to undertake an evaluation of the AU Human Rights Observers and Military Experts Mission in Burundi, with a view to drawing lessons and best practices for consideration in future deployment of similar missions elsewhere in the Continent, and to create a manual on the management of AU missions.