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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. P.O. Box: 3243 Tel.: (251-11) 5513 822 Fax: (251-11) 5519 321

Email: situationroom@africa-union.org

PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
1146TH MEETING

3 APRIL 2023
ADDIS-ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/COMM.1146 (2023)

COMMUNIQUÉ

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Adopted by the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) at its 1146th meeting held on 3 April 2023, on “Commemoration of the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action: Impact on Peace and Security in Africa”.

The Peace and Security Council,

Recalling its previous decisions and pronouncements on Mine Action and related thematic areas, particularly Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.1072 (2022)] adopted at its 1072nd meeting held on 1 April 2022; and **also recalling** Article 7.1(n) of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, which empowers the PSC to promote and encourage the implementation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU)/AU, United Nations (UN) and other relevant international Conventions and Treaties on arms control and disarmament; as well as the AU Mine Action and Explosives Remnants of War Strategic Framework (2014-2017);

Highlighting the critical importance of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) – also known as the Ottawa Convention, the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) and the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) in strengthening and upholding the norms against explosive weapons on the Continent;

Faithful to Resolution [CM/Res 1593] on the “UN Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and Problems Posed by the Proliferation of Anti-Personnel Mines in Africa”, adopted at the 62nd Ordinary Session of the OAU Council of Ministers, in June 1995, which, inter alia, called for the total ban of anti-personnel landmines and the universalization of the relevant legally binding instruments, as well as endorsed measures to address the impact of landmines and the developments that led to the adoption of the Common African Positions on landmines; and **also faithful** to Decision [CM/Dec.363 (LXVI)] adopted by the 66th Ordinary Session of the OAU Council of Ministers, in May 1997, in Harare, Zimbabwe;

Noting the statement of H.E. Abdelhamid Elgharbi, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Tunisia to the African Union and Chairperson of the PSC for the month of April 2023, and the remarks by H.E. Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security read on his behalf by the Director for Conflict Management Directorate, **also noting** the statements by the representatives of the United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU) and the European Union Delegation to the AU, as well as the presentations by the UN Mine Action Services (UNMAS), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC); and the Halo Trust; and

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

1. **Welcomes** the progress made by Member States in clearing areas under their jurisdiction contaminated by anti-personnel landmines and explosive remnants of war;
2. **Commends** all Member States that have fulfilled their mine clearance obligations to ensure that anti-personnel mines no longer cause death or disability to their populations, **encourages** those Member States that have not yet done so, to also do the same, in order to contribute to the efforts aimed at creating a landmine-free Africa, and **calls on** non-state actors to respect all international conventions and treaties that ban landmines;
3. **Also commends** UNMAS, United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), ICRC and the Halo Trust, as well as all the other entities working in the area of mine action for their relentless

efforts towards a landmine-free world; and **further commends in particular**, all international partners supporting Member States in fulfilling their commitments under the Ottawa Convention and appeals for their continued support;

4. **Notes with serious concern** the continued use of anti-personnel landmines in some parts of the Continent and the world, particularly, the use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) by non-state armed groups and terrorist groups, which jeopardizes efforts aimed at creating a landmine-free Africa and, **strongly condemns** the use of anti-personnel landmines, **sympathizes** with the victims of landmines and IEDs and **wishes** a speedy recovery to all those sustaining injuries due to landmine accidents; and in this regard, **underscores the critical need** for Member States to address the physical and psycho-social, as well as economic needs of survivors of landmine accidents, including through physical rehabilitation programmes; and to this end, **appeals** for the international community to support such efforts.

5. **Expresses deep concern** over the threat posed by explosive remnants of war, as well as unsecured or obsolete explosives and their devastating impacts on human lives, particularly children; in this regard, and in addition to the existing measures, **appeals** to Member States to redouble their efforts to ensure secure storage of state-owned stockpiles of explosives and to safely destroy the obsolete ones; and in this respect, **requests** the AU Commission and partners to continue providing the required technical and financial support;

6. **Emphasizes the importance** of sustained awareness-raising programmes on the dangers of landmines for affected communities and **underscores the need** for these programmes to be inclusive of, among others, the youth, women, media, community leaders, civil society, and the private sector, with a view to ensuring inclusivity and national ownership and sustainability;

7. **Calls** for the establishment of a Continental mechanism for mine action to coordinate and support the efforts of Member States; and **encourages** Member States to share expertise in mine clearance and cooperation on border security to address threats posed by anti-personnel landmines, and **requests** the Commission to support Member States to share existing technologies that can enhance demining;

8. **Expresses concern** over the funding gap of mine action at the national, regional, and continental levels, which poses a challenge to Member States in meeting their clearance deadlines; in this regard, **requests** the Commission to work closely with Member States and partners to mobilize funds and technical expertise to support the implementation of mine action activities;

9. **Calls** on the international community to renew its support to the remaining contaminated AU Member States so that they can also contribute towards meeting the 2025 deadline for a mine-free world;

10. **Takes note** of the progress made by the AU Commission in reviewing the AU Mine Action and Explosives Remnants of War Strategic Framework (2014-2017) and **looks forward** to receiving the updated version of the Strategic Framework, together with the Draft AU Counter IED Strategy, as soon as possible;

11. **Requests** the Commission, with the support of the RECs/RMs and partners, to organize an advocacy forum for Member States and all stakeholders to exchange views and share experiences on addressing threats posed by antipersonnel landmines in Africa;

12. **Underscores the need** to include the participation of victims of anti-personnel landmines in the PSC meetings on mine action, as well as in related activities of the Commission;
13. **Reiterates the need** to ensure the full implementation of the Maputo Action Plan with the support of the Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs) and partners in order to attain the goal of a landmine-free world by 2025; **encourages** Member States to fulfil their obligations pursuant to Article 5 of the Convention relating to the destruction of anti-personnel mines and, in this respect; **also encourages** Member States to submit their reports on the implementation of the Maputo Action Plan and Ottawa Convention in accordance with Article 7 of the latter;
14. **Strongly encourages** those Member States that have not yet done so, to sign and ratify the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and to ensure its full implementation;
15. **Agrees** to organize the next commemoration of the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action, as an Open Session that will bring together all Member States and RECs/RMs, partners, and other relevant stakeholders, to share their respective experiences, lessons, and best practices; and
16. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.

2023-04-03

Communiqué of the 1146th Meeting of the Peace and Security Council, Held on 3 April 2023, on “Commemoration of the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action: Impact on Peace and Security in Africa”.

Peace and Security Council

African Union Commission

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