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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
877TH MEETING
10 SEPTEMBER 2019
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/BR.(DCCCLXXVII)

PRESS STATEMENT

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The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU) dedicated its 877th meeting held on 10 September 2019, to an open session on the theme: "Climate Change and its impacts on Small Island Developing States".

Council and participants took note of the opening remarks made by H.E. Ambassador Mohammed Arrouchi of the Kingdom of Morocco in his capacity as the Chairperson of the PSC for the month of September 2019. They also took note of the presentations made by H.E. Ambassador David Pierre of the Republic of Seychelles in his capacity as a champion of the blue economy and the AU Department of Rural Economic and Agriculture, as well as the statement by H.E. Hanna Tette, UNSG Special Representative to the African Union and Head of the United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU). They further took note of the statements made by the representatives of AU Member States, Regional Economic Communities, AU partners and international organizations.

Council recalled all AU Assembly Decisions on climate change, particularly, Decisions [Assembly/AU/Dec723(XXXII)] adopted at its 32nd Ordinary Session held in February 2019 and [Assembly/AU/Dec. 669(XXX)] adopted at its 30th Ordinary Session held in January 2018. Council also recalled all its previous communiques and press statements on Climate Change, in particular the recent Press Statements [PSC/PR/BR.(DCCCLXIV)] adopted at its 864th meeting held on 6 August 2019.

Council expressed deep concern that Small Island Developing States are vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change and are already experiencing an increase in such impacts including sea level rise, coastal erosion, ocean acidification and weather extremes. In this regard, Council underscored the need for Member States to increase investments in adaptation and resilience programmes. Council underlined the need for integration of Blue Economy as a key component of national development and investment plans and programmes, in order to build better resilience against the negative effects of Climate change that lead the degradation of environment.

Council also expressed deep concern that sea level rise due to global warming continues to pose a significant risk to Small Island Developing States, threatening their survival and impacting on biodiversity, food security and the livelihoods of communities. Council underscored the need for conservation of biodiversity to sustain the livelihoods of Small Island Developing States and coastal communities.

Council highly commended the leadership and efforts of His Majesty King Mohammed VI for the operationalization of the Commission dedicated to the Congo Basin which held its first Heads of State and Government Summit, in Brazzaville, on 29 April 2018, under the leadership of H.E President Denis Sassou-NGUESSO of the Republic of Congo, as well as the operationalization of the Commission dedicated to the Sahel region, which held its first Summit of Heads of State and Government, in Niamey, Niger, on 25 February 2019, under the

leadership of the H.E President Mahamadou Issoufou of the Republic of Niger, in compliance with the decision of the 1st Africa Action Summit for Continental Co-Emergence, held on the sidelines of the COP 22 (Marrakech, 2016).

Council stressed the high importance of the operationalization of the Island States Commission that will largely contribute to the continental efforts aiming at addressing the issues relating to climate change effects on Small Island Developing States in Africa.

Council commended efforts and initiatives by the AU, such as the Committee of African Heads of States and Government on Climate Change (CAHOSCC), the African Adaptation Initiative (AAI), the African Renewable Energy Initiative (AREI) and the Initiative for Adaptation of African Agriculture (AAA), which aim at addressing the on-going climate actions on adaptation, mitigation and building resilience among the AU member States at national and regional levels.

Council underscored the importance of prioritizing early warning systems, prevention mechanisms and Disaster Risk Reduction Strategies.

Council noted with concern that there is no sufficient financing adequate to address the current impacts of climate change. In this regard, Council requested the competent AU organs and the Chairperson of the AU Commission to explore innovative means of financing climate actions in Africa, including partnering with the private sector to fill in the current funding gap, in order to provide the above-mentioned three Commissions, AAI, AREI and AAA with all necessary support, and appealed to all Member States to support this initiative.

Council reiterated its call for the support to international and regional commitments and agreements on climate change, in particular the Paris Agreement and in this regard called upon the international community to fulfil the pledge of USD 100 billion per year, to finance climate change actions at national, regional and international levels. Council further recalled the need to implement the commitment made according to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that deplete the Ozone Layer and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030) and its four priority areas for action, to prevent/reduce existing disaster risks, namely understanding disaster risk; strengthening disaster risk management; investing in disaster reduction for resilience and; enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response, and to "Build Back Better" in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

Council requested the Chairperson of the AU Commission to fast track the appointment of an AU Special Envoy for Climate Change and Security and the Permanent Representative Committee (PRC) to operationalize its Sub-Committee on Environment.

Council agreed to remain actively seized of the matter.