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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
754TH MEETING
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA
20 FEBRUARY 2018

PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCLIV)

COMMUNIQUÉ

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The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), at its 754th meeting held on 20 February 2018, adopted the following decision on the situation in Darfur and the activities of the AU-United Nations (UN) Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID):

Council,

1. **Takes note** of the statement delivered by Dr. Admore Kambudzi, Ag. Director for Peace and Security Department, on behalf of the Commissioner for Peace and Security, as well as briefing made by Ambassador Jeremiah Kingsley Mamabolo, the Joint Special Representative/ Joint Chief Mediator (JSR/JCM) for UNAMID. Council also **takes note** of the statements made by the representatives of the Sudan and Ethiopia, in its capacity as Chair of Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and African Member in the UN Security Council;
2. **Recalls** its previous communiqués and press statements on the situation in Darfur, including communiqués [PSC/PR/COMM. (DCV)], [PSC/PR/COMM. (DCLXII)], [PSC/PR/COMM.2 (DCXCI)] and [PSC/PR/BR. DCCXXVII] adopted at its 605th, 673rd, 691st and 727th meetings, held on 13 June 2016, 29 March 2017, 12 June 2017 and 27 October 2017, respectively. Council **also recalls** the recommendations of the Special Report of the UN Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on UNAMID (S/2016/510 of 8 June 2016), as well as UN Security Council resolutions 2296 (2016) of 29 June 2016 and 2363 (2017) of 29 June 2017;
3. **Notes with satisfaction** that the overall security situation in Darfur remained stable. Council **commends** the Government of Sudan for extending the unilateral ceasefire as announced on 8 October 2017 and **also commends** the armed movements for reciprocating the overture through declarations of unilateral ceasefire. Council **strongly calls** for more commitment towards reaching a permanent ceasefire in order to achieve sustainable peace and security in Darfur;
4. **Underscores its growing concern** over reports of inter-communal violence that has the potential to hamper progress made so far in reaching stability in Darfur. Council **urges** the Government of Sudan, with the support of UNAMID and the international community, to focus on projects that could assist in efforts towards curbing this disturbing phenomenon;
5. **Reiterates** its appreciation to the UNAMID leadership, in particular the Joint Special Representative, as well as the Force Commander and the Police Commissioner and all the personnel of the Mission, for their dedication and contribution to the promotion of peace, security, stability and reconciliation in Darfur. Council **commends** UNAMID for the successful completion of the First phase of its reconfiguration and **notes with appreciation** the efforts made in the implementation of UNAMID's mandate, particularly with respect to the establishment of the Jebel Marra Task Force, in furtherance of protection of vulnerable civilians, and the overall Mission's reconfiguration. Council **expresses appreciation** to the Government of Sudan for the cooperation extended towards the successful conduct of the UNAMID reconfiguration process, and for the allocation and handover of land for the establishment of the Temporary Operating Base in Golo;

6. **Welcomes** the establishment of Presidential Councils that will oversee the effective implementation of the outcomes of the National Dialogue and **further welcomes** the implementation by the Government of Sudan of “Right to Land Restitution Policy” and the enforcement of the rule of law across Darfur. Council **commends** the efforts by the Government of Sudan to stabilize the Darfur region through its collection of illegally owned weapons. In this regard, Council **urges** the Government of Sudan to ensure a fair and balanced approach that would ensure that no community feels disadvantaged in the conduct of such a process;

7. **Notes with great concern** that despite the improved political and security situation, owing to the Government’s ongoing weapons collection campaign and the Mission’s peacekeeping and stabilization efforts, challenges remain, especially in finding durable solutions to the estimated 2.7 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs); in addressing inter-communal violence; the issue of land occupation and ownership; and in the extension of Government authority and presence across Darfur, especially in rural areas. Council **reiterates its call on** the Government of Sudan to provide a conducive environment for the return of IDPs to their areas of agreed settlements and **calls on** UNAMID and international partners to support the Government of Sudan in its process of extending judicial services across Darfur;

8. **Underlines** that the Doha Document of Peace in Darfur (DDPD) remains the most plausible foundation for engagement towards resolving the conflict in Darfur. Council **notes with regret** the lack of commitment on the part of the non-signatory Darfur armed movements to complete their ascension to the DDPD despite tireless efforts of the AU High Implementation Panel (AUHIP), the JSR/JCM and the Government of Qatar, to take on board their valid concerns. In this regard, Council **urges** the non-signatory Darfur armed movements to immediately commence engagement for peace and reconciliation in Darfur on the basis of the DDPD. Council **reiterates its full support** to the AUHIP for its efforts to facilitate a permanent cessation of hostilities between the Government of Sudan and the Darfur armed movements on the basis of the Roadmap Agreement of March 2016 ;

9. **Underlines the need** that, in order to ensure the sustainability of peace and stability in Darfur, there is need for increased social and economic development for the people of Darfur. In this context, Council **calls on** the international community to strongly support capacity building and commit to resource mobilization for the realization of this objective;

10. **Expresses concern** that the search for peace in Darfur is unnecessarily prolonged resulting in loss of life and displacement of people in Darfur. Council, underlining the need for a rapid solution to the conflict in Darfur, **decides** as follows:

- a. The AUHIP and UNAMID should continue with their engagement with the parties to the conflict and provide an update on the progress made on these efforts within the next three months, in order for Council to take appropriate measures;

- b. Subsequent to the outcome of the engagement (outlined in para 10a above), the AU Commission should, by May 2018, elaborate possible measures, including possible sanctions, which could be applied against all those who continue to obstruct efforts towards lasting peace and security in Darfur. Such measures shall be considered and taken, bearing in mind the assessment reports of the UNAMID and AUHIP to the next Council meeting;
 - c. The AU Commission should immediately take the necessary steps to mobilize financial resources and humanitarian assistance in support of the peace process in Darfur; and
 - d. The need to realign UNAMID's priorities to support post-conflict reconstruction and developments efforts in Darfur, in line with the Mission's mandated two-pronged approach of peacekeeping and stabilization.
11. **Underscores** the need for the parties to the conflict to recognize the fact that, within its efforts to ending conflicts, in line with the implementation of the AU Master Roadmap of Practical Steps to Silence the Guns in Africa by the Year 2020, Council has a responsibility to ensure that parties to conflicts adhere to the basic principles enshrined in the Roadmap towards ending conflicts in the continent. In this regard, Council **reaffirms the need** for scrupulous respect for principles of good neighborhood in support to efforts aimed at creating a conducive environment for lasting peace and stability in Darfur;
12. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.