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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
773RD MEETING

18 MAY 2018
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCLXXIII)

COMMUNIQUE

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The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), at its 773rd meeting held on 18 May 2018, considered a report on its field mission to Sudan (Khartoum and Darfur), which took place from 5 to 9 May 2018, and adopted the following decision:

Council:

1. **Notes with satisfaction** the improved political and security environment in Darfur and **commends** the Government of Sudan and the African Union United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) for the great efforts deployed to ensure security, stability and development for the people of Darfur.
2. **Notes with deep concern** the humanitarian situation of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the camps and urges the Government of Sudan and the international community to redouble efforts to ensure that the IDPs are supplied with basic needs. Council **further notes** that the IDPs have expressed a strong desire to return to the areas of origin in order to engage in productive life after years in displacement.
3. **Acknowledges** that while the process of voluntary return of the IDPs to their areas of origin has been well received by the IDPs, there is still a need to urgently and equitably address the land tenure issues as it relates to the returnees. In this regard, Council **urges** the Government of Sudan, through the residual committees of the Darfur Regional Authority (DRA), to intensify efforts towards addressing the root causes of conflict in Darfur, including the return of the IDPs. Council **underlines** that UNAMID should continue to work closely with the Government of Sudan to ensure that there is enough international support for this key initiative. In this regard, Council **requests** the Government of Sudan to present a full report to the PSC on progress made to address the root causes of the Sudanese crisis in Darfur, in order to avert any possible relapse to conflict, to its next session on UNAMID;
4. **Welcomes** the peace efforts deployed by the Government of Sudan on the collection of arms from the civilians. Council **commends** the Government of Sudan, with the support of UNAMID, for the efforts deployed to collect arms, which has greatly contributed to the stabilization of the security situation in the region and **encourages the** Government to sustain this exercise, in a balanced and equitable manner, to ensure that the arms collection process is effective and does not lead to further clashes;
5. **Emphasizes the need** to further stabilizing the security sector within the framework of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD) and the African Union Policy Framework on Security Sector Reform, which ensures national decision and ownership of the security reform, and alignment with conflict prevention, peace processes, and post conflict reconstruction;

6. **Strongly supports** the request of the Government of Sudan to the United Nations for Darfur to be placed on the agenda of the UN Peacebuilding Commission (UNPBC). Council **agrees** to discuss the matter with the UNPBC, on the margin of its 12th Annual Joint Consultative Meeting with the UNSC, to be held in July 2018 in New York;
7. **Requests** the AU Commission, in view of the change of the mandate of the UNAMID from peacekeeping to peacebuilding, to dispatch to Darfur, an AU assessment mission to engage the Government of Sudan, UNAMID and the UN Country Team, with a view to identify areas of post conflict reconstruction and reconciliation, which require urgent support from the AU Commission in order to prevent conflict relapse;
8. **Requests** the Chairperson of the Union and the Chairperson of the AU Commission to continue providing political support to the Government of Sudan and UNAMID, in line with the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA);
9. **Reiterates** its previous communiques and press statements on the withdrawal of UNAMID and that the process should be conducted in a gradual manner while ensuring that protection of civilians is not compromised;
10. **Adopts** the report of its field mission to Sudan during the period, from 5 to 9 May 2018, with its recommendations and **requests** the AU Commission to dispatch it to all stakeholders for the implementation of the recommendations;
11. **Express its gratitude** to the people and Government of Sudan, as well as to UNAMID for the support accorded to the PSC delegation during its visit;
12. **Decides** to remain seized of the matter.