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**PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL 318TH MEETING
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA
17 April 2012**

PSC/PR/COMM(CCCXVIII)

COMMUNIQUE

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The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 318th meeting held on 17 April 2012, adopted the following decision on the situation in Guinea-Bissau:

Council,

1. **Takes note** of the briefing provided by the Commissioner for Peace and Security on the developments in the situation in Guinea-Bissau. Council **also takes note** of the statements made by the representatives of Cote d'Ivoire, in its capacity as the Chair of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and Angola, as the Chair of the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP);
2. **Reaffirms** the provisions of the AU Constitutive Act, the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council, and Chapter VIII of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance on unconstitutional changes of government;
3. **Strongly condemns** the coup d'etat that took place in Guinea Bissau on 12 April 2012, two weeks before the second round of the presidential election scheduled for 29 April 2012. Council **stresses** that the recurrence of illegal and unacceptable interference of the leadership of the Bissau-Guinean army in the political life of the country contributes to the persistence of instability and the culture of impunity, hampers efforts towards the establishment of the rule of law, the promotion of development and the entrenchment of a democratic culture, while, at the same time, making it difficult to fight against the scourge of drug trafficking. Council **underscores** the need for Africa and the international community as a whole, to show firmness commensurate with the seriousness of the acts committed by the perpetrators of the coup d'etat and its consequences for Guinea Bissau, the region and for Africa as a whole;
4. **Demands** the immediate restoration of constitutional order and the continuation of the electoral process, with the organization of the second round of the presidential election, as well as the unconditional release of the Acting President of the Republic and the other political personalities sequestered by the perpetrators of the coup d'etat. Council **holds** the perpetrators of the coup personally responsible for the safety of the sequestered personalities, whose physical integrity and dignity should be imperatively preserved;
5. **Endorses** the press statements issued on 13 and 14 April 2012, by the Chairperson of the Commission on the situation in Guinea Bissau, as well as the statements made by ECOWAS and the CPLP;
6. **Decides**, in conformity with the relevant AU instruments, to suspend, with immediate effect, the participation of Guinea Bissau in all activities of the African Union until the effective restoration of constitutional order. Furthermore, and given the frequency of coups d'etat in Guinea Bissau, Council **requests** the Commission, in consultation with ECOWAS and the AU partners, to submit to it, within two weeks, for decision, proposals for additional sanctions against the perpetrators of the coup d'etat and their civilian and military supporters, including travel ban, asset freeze and other measures, as provided for by the Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. In this respect, Council **reaffirms** the relevant provisions of article 25 of the Charter, which states that authors of unconstitutional changes of government will be liable to prosecution;

7. **Calls upon** the AU partners, particularly the United Nations, the European Union, the CPLP and bilateral partners, to support the measures taken by the AU, and to work together to force the perpetrators of the coup d'etat and their supporters to accept the return to constitutional legality in Guinea Bissau;

8. **Expresses its gratitude** to Angola for its valuable contribution to the efforts towards the stabilization of Guinea Bissau and the reform of the defense and security sector. Council **requests** the Chairperson of the Commission to initiate consultations with ECOWAS, CPLP, the United Nations and the other partners, for the establishment of a mission that would continue the work initiated within the framework of the implementation of the ECOWAS-CPLP Roadmap, in particular the aspects relating to the reform of the defense and security sector in Guinea Bissau, including the possible deployment of a new international stabilization operation;

9. **Requests** the Chairperson of the Commission, in close cooperation with ECOWAS, the CPLP and the United Nations, to take all necessary steps to contact the actors concerned in Guinea-Bissau, in order to hasten the attainment of the objective of restoration of constitutional order, in conformity with the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. Council **urges** the stakeholders in Guinea Bissau to take all necessary measures to ensure the organization of the second round of the presidential election;

10. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.