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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL 335TH MEETING

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA
19 SEPTEMBER 2012

PSC/PR/COMM (CCCXXXV)

COMMUNIQUE

The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 335th meeting held on 19 September 2012, adopted the following decision on the security situation in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the deployment of a Neutral International Force in this region:

Council,

1. **Takes note** of the briefing provided by the Commission, as well as of the statements by the representatives of Uganda, on behalf of the Chair of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), the DRC and Rwanda. Council **also takes note** of the statements made by the representatives of the European Union (EU) and the United States of America;
2. **Recalls** press statement PSC/PR/COMM (CCCXXIV), adopted at its 324th meeting, held on 21 June 2012, and paragraph 8 of decision Assembly/AU/Dec.432 (XIX) on the situation in eastern DRC, adopted by the 19th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union, held in Addis Ababa, on 15 and 16 July 2012;
3. **Reiterates AU s concern** at the security and humanitarian situation prevailing in eastern DRC, its commitment to the respect of the unity and territorial integrity of the DRC, as well as its rejection of the recourse to armed rebellion, which poses a serious threat to peace, security and stability in the DRC and the region, while, at the same time, undermining the viability of the ongoing democratization process in the country. In this regard, Council **reiterates its strong condemnation** of the action of the M23 and all other negative forces located in eastern DRC;
4. **Stresses the need** for sustained efforts to eradicate the presence of the negative forces in eastern DRC, effectively restore State authority, and promote lasting peace, security and stability in the region, including through the effective implementation of the Goma Agreement of 23 March 2009 between the Government of the DRC and the National Congress for the Defense of the People (CNDP), on the basis of a comprehensive assessment of progress made in the implementation of the recommendations of the former Joint Special Envoys of the ICGLR, the AU and the UN, former Presidents Benjamin Mkapa and Olusegun Obasanjo, with the view to enabling the countries of the region to determine the best way forward;
5. **Welcomes** the efforts of the Member States and the Executive Secretariat of the ICGLR, in order to find a lasting solution to the situation in eastern DRC and, in particular, **expresses its appreciation** to President Yoweri K. Museveni, Chairperson of the ICGLR, for his role and initiatives that led to a suspension of the armed confrontation between the Armed Forces of the DRC (FARDC) and the M23. In this regard, Council **fully supports** all the measures set out in the Declaration adopted by the 3rd Extraordinary Summit of the ICGLR, held in Kampala, Uganda, on 8 September 2012, namely, (i) the cessation of hostilities and the diplomatic efforts; (ii) the Neutral International Force; (iii) the expanded Joint Verification Mechanism (JVM) and the Joint Intelligence Fusion Center (JIFC); and (iv) the Humanitarian Trust Fund. Council **also welcomes** the cooperation between the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the countries of the region towards the search for a lasting

solution;

6. **Stresses in particular** the importance of the effective operationalization of the JVM, as well as the establishment and deployment of the envisaged Neutral International Force, **welcomes** the steps underway to dispatch a military assessment team to eastern DRC comprising representatives of the member countries of the ICGLR and the AU Commission, and to which international partners, including the UN and the EU, have been invited to participate. Council **welcomes** the elaboration of the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the assessment team by the Committee of Ministers Defense of the member countries of the ICGLR, held in Goma, DRC, on 15 September 2012. Council **calls on** the Commission, in cooperation with the Executive Secretariat of the ICGLR and with the support of the UN and other international partners, to develop, on the basis of the findings of the assessment team, a strategic document articulating in a holistic manner the political, military and security measures that need to be taken, as well as the synergies and complementarities with existing mechanisms and arrangements in the region, including the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), in order to facilitate the success of the ongoing efforts;

7. **Notes with satisfaction** the measures already taken by the Commission to support the efforts of the ICGLR, including its participation in the various meetings organized by the countries of the region, the support to the envisaged military assessment team, and its contribution to the strengthening of the capacity of the ICGLR Executive Secretariat. Council **calls on** the Commission to pursue its efforts and to contribute to the mobilization of the international support required for the effective implementation of the Kampala Summit decisions;

8. **Appeals** to all AU Member States to contribute to the ongoing efforts of the ICGLR aimed at achieving a lasting solution, including the operationalization of the Neutral International Force and the expanded JVM, as well as to humanitarian assistance to affected populations;

9. **Requests** the United Nations to provide the necessary support to the efforts of countries of the region, particularly with regard to the operationalization of the Neutral International Force and the expanded JVM. In this context, Council **stresses** the vital role of the Security Council, bearing in mind its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Council **calls upon** all other members of the international community, in particular AU's bilateral and multilateral partners, to extend the necessary support to the efforts of the ICGLR. Council **welcomes** the high-level meeting on the situation in the DRC, scheduled to be held in New York, on 27 September 2012, at the initiative of the UN Secretary- General;

10. **Looks forward** to the conclusions of the Extraordinary Summit of Heads of State of the ICGLR scheduled to take place in Kampala, on 8 October 2012, to review the status of implementation of the decisions taken on 8 September 2012, to enable it pronounce itself on the evolution of the situation and take all appropriate decisions on the matter;

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