

**AFRICAN UNION**

**UNION**

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**PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL 829<sup>TH</sup> MEETING 26 FEBRUARY 2019 ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**

**PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCCXXIX)**

**COMMUNIQUE**

## COMMUNIQUE

The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), during its 829<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 26 February 2019, adopted the following decision on the situation in Darfur and the ongoing drawdown of the African Union United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID):

### **Council:**

1. **Takes note** of the briefing made by the Joint Special Representative of UNAMID, Ambassador Jeremiah Kingsley Mamabolo, and the statements made by the representatives of The Sudan; Ethiopia, in its capacity as Chair of Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD); and South Africa, in its capacity as an African Member (A3) of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC);
2. **Recalls** its previous communiqués and press statements on the situation in Darfur, including communiqués PSC/PR/COMM.(DCV), PSC/PR/COMM.(DCLXXIII), PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCLXXVIII) and PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCXCIV) adopted at its 605<sup>th</sup>, 673<sup>rd</sup>, 773<sup>rd</sup> and 794<sup>th</sup> meetings, held on 13 June 2016, 29 March 2017, 18 May 2018, 11 June 2018 and 19 September 2019, respectively. Council **also recalls the** UN Security Council resolutions 2033 (2012) of 12 January 2012, 2296 (2016) of 29 June 2016, 2363 (2017) and 2429 (2018);
3. **Notes with appreciation** the efforts made in the implementation of UNAMID's mandate, in particular with respect to the protection of civilians in Darfur. In this regard, Council **pays tribute** to the Mission for its continued commitment to peace and security in Darfur. Council **notes with satisfaction**, the progress made in the process of reconfiguration and drawdown of UNAMID, since the adoption of UNSC resolution 2429 (2018), as the Mission is now in the last four months of the current mandate implementation. In this respect, Council **takes notes** of the phased drawdown of the civilian and military components of the Mission, which, by 30 June 2019, will bring down the Force strength to 4,050, while the police component continues to maintain an overall strength of 2,500 personnel, given the need to maintain and assist the Government of Sudan in law and order enforcement;
4. **Takes also note with appreciation** the improved security situation, which has contributed to the creation of a new environment that is conducive for economic recovery and development in Darfur and **emphasizes** the need for the AU and the UN to continue to closely monitor the situation on the ground, with a view to consolidating the gains made. Council **reiterates its appreciation** to the Government of Sudan and to the leadership of the Joint Special Representative, as well as the Mission's personnel, for their continued dedication and contribution to the promotion of peace, security, stability and reconciliation in Darfur;
5. **Commends** the continued cooperation between UNAMID and the Government of Sudan and, in this regard, **welcomes** the handover of an additional ten (10) team sites and three (3) community police centres by UNAMID to the Government of Sudan in late 2018. Council **encourages** the two sides to sustain these relations in order to facilitate a smooth handover of the three UNAMID sector headquarters, namely, in Nyala, El Daein and El Geneina, by 30 June 2019;

6. **Welcomes** the close cooperation between UNAMID and the UN agencies, Funds and programmes (AFP) in jointly developing a transition concept of state liaison functions (SLFs), which is currently under implementation. Council **underscores** the importance of developing sustainable solutions to address the fundamental root causes and drivers of the conflict in Darfur. Council **looks forward** to further submissions relating to this cooperation, especially with regard to four critical aspects that include the rule of law, resilience and livelihoods/durable solutions for the displaced populations and their host communities, immediate service delivery for internally displaced persons and human rights promotion, including capacity building. Council underlines the critical importance of these aspects in preventing a relapse back to violent conflict in Darfur, besides also enabling the Government of Sudan, the UN country team, partners and international actors successfully to prepare for the Mission's envisaged exit in June 2020. Council **welcomes** the USD\$15 million financial assistance allocated from the UNAMID assessed budget for this purpose. Furthermore, Council **calls on** the international community, led by the AU Commission and the UN, to convene, at the earliest opportunity, a pledging conference to mobilize resources in support of recovery, stabilisation and development programmes in Darfur;

7. **Welcomes** UNAMID efforts to focus on early warning, conflict prevention measures, capacity-building and efforts to address the fundamental root causes and drivers of violent conflict in collaboration with Government authorities, UN Country Team (UNCT), tribal and community leaders. Council **notes with appreciation** that, through the state liaison functions, UNCT and UNAMID are closely monitoring the impact of the withdrawal of UNAMID from the 10 team sites. In this regard, Council **underscores the need** to further strengthen rule of law and preventive mechanisms and to assess the impact of the economic crisis on the most vulnerable segments of the population, in particular the IDPs and returnees, as a mechanism to prevent relapse into conflict;

8. **Commends** the Joint Special Representative for his continued support to the efforts of the AU High-Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) and for his continued cooperation and coordination with the Government of the Sudan and the held out movements. Council **encourages** the Government of Sudan and all the Darfur movements to intensify efforts towards the political resolution of the crisis in Darfur. Council **urges** the Government of Sudan and the Darfur armed movements to sustain the negotiation process in order to address the outstanding matters within the context of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD), and **commends** all efforts that could lead to the resolution of the situation in Darfur, particularly the efforts of the Government of Qatar, Germany and the United States. Council **encourages** all parties to the conflict, especially the armed movements, to recommit to the political process on the basis of the DDPD;

9. **Notes** that the overall security situation in Darfur remains relatively stable. Council **urges** the Government of Sudan to expedite the establishment of community courts and other justice, law and order agencies in order to more effectively combat the upsurge of criminal activities, impunity and to hold perpetrators accountable;

10. **Expresses concern** at reports of ongoing intermittent clashes between government forces and the Sudan Liberation Army-Abdul Wahid (SLA-AW), as well as attacks on IDPs and returnees and fatalities

related to intercommunal clashes and destruction of farms in parts of Darfur, particularly in West and North Darfur. Once again, Council stresses that those who continue to perpetrate abuses and violations against innocent civilians shall be held accountable and therefore **appeals** to the Government of Sudan to grant unhindered access to UNAMID and humanitarian partners to ensure independent verification of reported cases;

11. **Notes with deep concern** the continued insecurity and humanitarian crisis in the IDPs camps and **urges** the Government of Sudan and the international community to continue to work together and redouble their efforts towards ensuring the protection of IDPs and sustained provision of basic humanitarian needs to the affected population;

12. **Stresses** the fragility of the gains made so far in Darfur. In this respect, Council **underscores the need** for the Government and all Sudanese stakeholders to deploy the necessary efforts to protect those gains and demonstrate the necessary restraint from any action that could jeopardise the current momentum towards peace, security and stability in Darfur;

13. **Welcomes** the dispatch of the AU/UN joint strategic assessment mission to UNAMID and **looks forward** to the report of the Secretary-General and the AU Commission Chairperson on the drawdown process, especially in terms of outlining the next steps that could ensure the preservation of peace, stability and development in Darfur before the envisaged termination of the mission in June 2020;

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