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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL 901st MEETING

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA
13 DECEMBER 2019

PSC/PR/COMM. (CMI)

COMMUNIQUE

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Adopted by the Peace and Security Council at its 901st meeting held on 13 December 2019, on AU's conflict prevention and early warning efforts and the challenges encountered, as well as on the horizon scanning briefing on the state of peace and security in Africa.

The Peace and Security Council,

Noting the growing security threat to the Continent, which is being posed by terrorism and violent extremism;

Also noting the presentation made by the AU Commission on AU's conflict prevention and early warning efforts and the challenges being encountered, as well as the horizon scanning briefing on the state of peace and security on the Continent;

Bearing in mind the elections that will be organized in many countries on the continent during the course of 2020 and the need to ensure that they are held in a conducive atmosphere in order to ensure their credibility;

Mindful of its main objectives as stipulated in the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, particularly, anticipation and prevention of conflicts;

Recalling its previous communiqués and press statements on early warning and conflict prevention in Africa, in particular, Communiqué PSC/PR/COMM (CCCLX) on "The Full Use of All Available Tools on Preventive Diplomacy", adopted at its 360th meeting and Communiqué PSC/PR/COMM (CDLXIII) on "Structural Prevention of Conflict: Reinvigorating States in Fragile Situations", adopted at its 463rd meeting.

Acting under Article 7 of its Protocol, the Peace and Security Council:

1. **Acknowledges** that while significant progress has been made by AU Member States, the African Union (AU) as well as other stakeholders in the area of conflict prevention, the African Continent continues to grapple with persistent and emerging peace and security threats;
2. **Expresses deep concern** over the negative impact of climate change on peace and security in the Continent, including, shrinkage and drying up of key water sources that include the Lake Chad, environmental degradation, desertification, erratic and extreme weather patterns, cyclones, floods, landslides and drought, triggering fierce inter-communal conflicts over scarce resources;
3. **Underlines the imperative** for a more systematic engagement on early warning, early response and conflict prevention efforts, using various decisions of Council and the AU Master Roadmap of Practical Steps to Silence the Guns by Year 2020 (AUMR), which was endorsed by the 28th Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly in January 2017;
4. **Underscores the importance** of providing technical support to Member States, and enhancing their national early warning, conflict prevention and conflict resolution mechanisms, with a view to

preventing election-related violent conflicts and crises;

5. **Urges** the AU Commission and the Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs) to accelerate their efforts towards the full operationalization and effective use of all existing instruments for early warning and conflict prevention, with a view to effectively addressing the complex and multifaceted threats to peace and security on the Continent;

6. **Encourages** all AU Member States to guard against denialism to credible early warning signs of looming crises and to extend necessary political support to the PSC, and the RECs/RMs, with a view to enabling these entities to more effectively discharge their conflict prevention and peacemaking mandates, in line with the PSC Protocol;

7. **Reiterates the call** for the implementation of its previous decisions on conflict prevention, including the AU Master Roadmap for silencing the Guns in Africa by the year 2020, which calls for strengthening the linkages between early warning and early response through, among other things, periodic review by Council, at least once every six months, of the state of peace and security on the Continent, using horizon scanning approaches and on the basis of updates provided by CEWS, the Panel of the Wise (PoW), relevant AU organs such as the Pan African Parliament (PAP), the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), as well as African think-tanks and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs);

8. **Underlines, once again, the need** for Member States to holistically address the fundamental root causes conflict, including youth unemployment, poverty, marginalization, corruption, lack of accountability and poor management of diversity; **encourages** Member States to make full use of the tools available at the Commission for structural conflict prevention, including the Country Structural Vulnerability and Resilience Assessment (CSVRA) and Country Structural Vulnerability Mitigation Strategies (CSVMS); **also encourages** Member States to sign, ratify and fully domesticate the AU Convention on Cross-Border Collaboration (Niamey Convention);

9. **Decides** to hold a brainstorming session of the PSC, as soon as possible, which will be dedicated to early warning and conflict prevention, in order to raise awareness of Member States of all existing AU tools for conflict prevention, as well as to review the reflect on best means and ways of effectively bridging the gap between early warning and early response;

10. **Also decides** to hold quarterly meetings of the PSC Committee of Experts, to be devoted to early warning and conflict prevention, in order to promote systematic and regular engagements between the PSC and other strategic pillars of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) in the area of early warning and conflict prevention;

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