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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. P.O. Box: 3243 Tel.: (251-11) 5513 822 Fax: (251-11) 5519 321

Email: situationroom@africa-union.org

PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
1172ND MEETING

31 AUGUST 2023
ADDIS-ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/COMM.1172 (2023)

COMMUNIQUÉ



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Adopted by the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) at its 1172nd meeting held on 31 August 2023, on the situation in the Republic of Gabon.

The Peace and Security Council,

Recalling Declaration [Ext/Assembly/AU/Decl.(XVI)] on Terrorism and Unconstitutional Changes of Government, adopted by the 16th Extraordinary Session of the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government held in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, from 27 to 28 May 2022; Decision AHG/Dec.141(XXXV) and AHG/Dec.142(XXXV), adopted by the 35th Ordinary Session of the OAU Assembly of Heads of State and Government held in Algiers, Algeria, from 12 to 14 July 1999; the Declaration on the Framework for an OAU Response to Unconstitutional Changes of Government, adopted by the 36th Ordinary Session of the OAU Assembly of Heads of State and Government held in Lomé, Togo, from 10 to 12 July 2000 (the Lomé Declaration); and the Solemn Declaration of the 50th OAU/AU Anniversary adopted in Addis Ababa on 25 May 2013;

Also recalling Press Statement [PSC/PR/BR.(DCCCXI)] adopted at its 821st meeting held on 9 January 2019; and the Press Release of the Chairperson of the AU Commission, H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat, issued on 30 August 2023 following the coup d'état in the Republic of Gabon;

Upholding the AU Constitutive Act, the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, particularly Article 7 (g); and **reiterating** the AU zero tolerance of unconstitutional changes of government, in line with Article 4(p) of the AU Constitutive Act;

Taking note of the opening remarks by H.E. Ambassador Willy Nyamitwe, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Burundi to the AU and PSC Chairperson for the month of August 2023; the briefing by H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the AU Commission delivered on his behalf by H.E. Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, the AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, and the statement by the Representative of the Secretariat of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS); and

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

1. **Reiterates its deep concern** over the resurgence of military coups d'états, as they undermine democracy, peace, security and stability, as well as development on the Continent;
2. **Strongly condemns** the 30 August 2023 military coup d'état in the Republic of Gabon, which ousted President Ali Bongo Ondimba, thereby interrupting the constitutional order in the country; and **welcomes** the Press Release of the Chairperson of the AU Commission, H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat, issued on 30 August 2023, and the Communique of the ECCAS Commission, also issued on 30 August 2023, on the Political Situation in the Gabonese Republic, following the coup d'état;
3. **Decides** to immediately suspend the participation of the Republic of Gabon in all activities of the AU and its Organs and institutions until the restoration of constitutional order in the country, in line with the relevant AU instruments, in particular, the AU Constitutive Act and the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union;

4. ***Demands*** the immediate restoration of constitutional order through the conduct of free, fair, credible and transparent elections that would be observed by the AU Election Observer Mission and the concerned region;
5. ***Also demands*** the military to immediately return to the barracks and to unconditionally return power to the civilian authority, uphold their constitutional mandate, and the principle of constitutionalism, and refrain from any interference in the political processes in Gabon, ***failing which***, the Council will take necessary measures including the imposition of targeted sanctions against the perpetrators of the coup d'état;
6. ***Further demands*** the immediate release and guarantee of the human rights, personal integrity, safety and health of President Ali Bongo Ondimba, his family members and members of his Government; ***condemns*** any politically motivated arrests in the circumstances, and ***stresses*** the importance of ensuring that all political detainees are processed through the judicial system as prescribed by the law of the land;
7. ***Reaffirms*** the AU solidarity with the people of Gabon in their legitimate aspirations for democracy and good governance and ***encourages*** them to remain calm, refrain from any action that may inflame the situation, and also to embrace dialogue as the only viable approach towards finding consensual and lasting solutions to the challenges facing the country;
8. ***Requests*** the AU Commission to deploy a high-level mission to Gabon to engage with the key Gabonese stakeholders, working in collaboration with ECCAS and other relevant stakeholders on all key issues, with a view to laying the necessary foundation for the immediate transfer of power to a civilian-led and democratically elected government;
9. ***Also requests*** the Chairperson of the Commission to continue to closely monitor the evolution of the situation, including through the establishment of an inclusive monitoring mechanism, comprising the AU, ECCAS and other relevant stakeholders, and to report back to the Council within fifteen (15) days from the adoption of this Communique;
10. ***Directs*** the AU Commission and the Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs) to enhance early warning mechanisms and early responses to ensure effective deployment of preventive diplomacy efforts;
11. ***Stresses the need*** for Member States to comprehensively address the structural root causes of, and conditions that facilitate unconstitutional changes of government; and in this regard, ***reiterates*** its request to the AU Commission, with the support of Member States and the RECs/RMs, to undertake a comprehensive and objective study on the structural root causes of unconstitutional changes of government;
12. ***Strongly rejects*** any external interferences by any actor or country outside the Continent in the peace and security matters in Africa, including engagements by private military companies in the Continent in line with the 1977 OAU Convention for the Elimination of Mercenarism in Africa; and
13. ***Decides*** to remain actively seized of the matter.