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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL 374<sup>TM</sup> MEETING

7 MAY 2013

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/COMM.(CCCLXXIV)

COMMUNIQUE

## COMMUNIQUE

The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 374<sup>th</sup> meeting held in Addis Ababa, on 7 May 2013, adopted the following decision on the latest developments in the situation in Abyei:

### **Council,**

1. **Takes note** of the briefing made by the Chief of Staff of the African Union High Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP), Mr. Abdul-Kader Mohammed, on the incident and criminal act that took place in Baloom, Abyei, on 4 May 2013, which led to the killing of the Paramount Chief of the NgokDinka community, Chief Kuol Deng Majok, as well as a peacekeeper from the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA), and seriously injured three other peacekeepers. Council **also takes note** of the statements made by the Permanent Representatives of the Republic of South Sudan and the Republic of Sudan, as well as by the Representatives of France, the United Kingdom and the United States;
2. **Expresses its condolences** to the bereaved families of the deceased, to the NgokDinka community, and to the Government of Ethiopia. Council **also expresses** its wishes for a speedy recovery to the injured peacekeepers;
3. **Condemns in the strongest terms** the ambush and attack against UNISFA, that resulted in the heinous killing of the NgokDinka Paramount Chief and an Ethiopian UN peacekeeper, as well as the injuries of other soldiers, which occurred immediately after the first extraordinary meeting of the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee (AJOC), convened by the UNISFA Head of Mission and Force Commander to discuss the prevailing security situation in Abyei and to explore the best possible way to address the security concerns in the area;
4. **Expresses grave concern** that this attack has the potential to compromise the significant progress that has been made by Sudan and South Sudan in the last two months to promote mutually cooperative relations, and **urges** the leadership and the people of the two countries to demonstrate utmost restraint and to do all in their power to ensure that this incident does not escalate. Council **further urges** the two Governments to exercise control over the respective communities in the Abyei area;
5. **Urges** the Government of Sudan to ensure that all those responsible for this heinous crime are brought to justice immediately. In this respect, Council **stresses the need** for consultations between the UN, the AU, the Governments of Sudan and South Sudan, with a view to urgently establishing a credible, transparent and independent inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the incident and criminal act of 4<sup>th</sup> of May 2013, which took place in Baloom, Abyei, and resulted in the killing of the Paramount Chief Kuol Deng Majok and UNISFA personnel. Council **also stresses the need** for the urgent definition of the Terms of Reference of the proposed inquiry;
6. **Expresses concern** at the reports that the various communities living in Abyei are heavily armed.

Council **recalls** that the June 2011 Agreement on Temporary Arrangements for the Administration and Security of the Abyei Area stipulates that Abyei should be a weapons-free Area, and that only UNISFA is authorized to carry weapons inside the area. To this end, Council **urges** the two Governments to take all the necessary steps to ensure that Abyei is effectively demilitarized, including through disarmament programmes as necessary. Council **further appeals** to the Government of Sudan to fully and immediately withdraw its forces from the demilitarized zone;

7. **Urges** the two Governments immediately to take steps to implement confidencebuilding measures among the respective communities living in the Abyei area, including through reconciliation processes at the grass-roots level, as well as the introduction of programmes to assist in the return of internally displaced persons to their respective communities, and **calls on** the two Governments to implement the agreements they have signed;

8. **Stresses** that this grave incident that occurred in Abyei serves to underscore that the status quo in Abyei is not tenable. Council, having expressed its appreciation for the efforts by both President Omar Hassan al Bashir and President Salva Kiir Mayardit to contain the crisis and prevent it from escalating, **urges** the two Heads of State, who have accepted responsibility for addressing the Abyei issue, to meet immediately, in order to address the impasse blocking the full implementation of the Agreement on Temporary Arrangements for the Administration and Security of Abyei Area, in particular the establishment of the key temporary institutions in Abyei, namely the Abyei Area Administration, the Abyei Area Council and the Abyei Police Service, and to work with AJOC and UNISFA to restore and maintain security in Abyei;

9. **Further urges** the two Heads of State to reach agreement on the final status of Abyei, on the basis of the AUHIP proposal of 21 September 2012;

10. **Expresses its appreciation and full support to** UNISFA in providing security in a very challenging environment, and calls on both governments to give it their full cooperation. Council **also expresses its appreciation** to Ethiopia for its commitment to the cause of peace in Sudan and South Sudan. In this regard, Council **calls on** the United Nations Security Council urgently to provide the additional forces requested by UNISFA to be able to expand its mandate into the neighbouring border area between Sudan and South Sudan;

11. **Requests** the Commission to provide an update on the situation in the next two weeks, to enable it to decide on further steps to take.

12. **Decides** to remain seized of the matter.