

AFRICAN UNION

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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL 383RD MEETING

29 JUNE 2013

ALGIERS, ALGERIA

PSC/MIN/COMM.(CCCLXXXIII)

COMMUNIQUE

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The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 383rd meeting held at the ministerial level in Algiers, on 29 June 2013, discussed the theme: "National Reconciliation: Crucial Factor for Security, Stability and Development in Africa". At the end of its deliberations and inspired by the national success stories shared by the delegations during the meeting, Council adopted the following decision:

Council,

1. **Takes note** of the Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on "Peace, Justice and Development - National Reconciliation as a critical factor for peace and development in Africa [PSC/MIN/2(CCCLXXXIII)]. Council **also takes note** of the statements made by the Chairperson of the AU Peace and Security Council for the month of June 2013, the representative of the Chairperson of the African Union, the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, the United Nations Under Secretary-General for Political Affairs, the Executive Secretary-General of the European Service for External Action, and the Representative of the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States;
2. **Recalls** AU's continuing efforts to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of its approach and means of action in conflict prevention, management and resolution, as well as in post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding, on the basis of African ownership and leadership;
3. **Notes** that while significant progress has been made in the promotion of peace, security and stability, Africa still continues to face persistent conflicts, insecurity and instability, with the attendant humanitarian and socio-economic consequences. In this context, Council **reiterates AU's** concern at the resurgence of unconstitutional changes of government and the trivialization of the recourse to armed rebellion to assert political demands;
4. **Stresses** that conflict prevention and peacemaking, as well as peacebuilding, are major challenges in the new era that Africa is entering in the wake of the fiftieth anniversary of the OAU/AU, under the banner of Pan-Africanism and African Renaissance. In this context, Council **notes** that the cessation of hostilities is only the first step in laying the foundations of peace, and that national reconciliation is an imperative for overcoming divisions arising from conflict and restoring social cohesion, in order to ensure lasting stability and progress;
5. **Emphasizes** that the culture of national reconciliation will contribute to enriching the African shared values and addressing the challenge of managing and respecting diversity to make it the basis of national cohesion, as well as to the entrenchment of democracy, good governance and human rights;
6. **Recalls** that Africa has different national reconciliation experiences, each with its own specificity, but which all helped the peoples concerned to enjoy the benefits of harmony and embark on the path to national recovery. Council **also recalls** the crucial importance of the fight against impunity in conformity with the relevant provisions of the AU Constitutive Act, and

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reiterates in this respect the provisions of press statement PSC/PR/BR(CCCXLVII) adopted at its 347th meeting held on 12 December 2012;

7. **Notes** that beyond their specificities, experiences in national reconciliation present some common characteristics that can serve as inspiration for other countries seeking to break away from the cycle of violence. In this regard, Council **highlights** the following elements that could serve as a basis for the conduct of national reconciliation processes:

- (i) a strong political will and good faith of the parties concerned and inclusiveness,
- (ii) a vision of lasting peace for the present and future generations and addressing factors that contribute to conflict and cause untold suffering,
- (iii) adherence to the principles of dialogue, mutual accommodation, national unity and territorial integrity,
- (iv) usage, as appropriate, of existing traditional mechanisms of conflict resolution and reconciliation, taking into account the obligations and commitments of Member States under various African and international instruments on democracy, human rights, governance and rule of law,
- (v) comprehensiveness through a judicious combination of measures relating to truth-telling, repentance, justice, healing, forgiveness, solidarity, reparations, reintegration and socio-economic development, and
- (vi) establishment of reliable implementation and monitoring mechanisms, in order to take forward, in the best possible conditions, the various aspects of reconciliation;

8. **Stresses** the important role of traditional leaders, youth and women in the design and successful implementation of national reconciliation processes. In this respect, Council **calls for** renewed efforts to foster their active involvement in peace processes, particularly with respect to national reconciliation aspects;

9. **Encourages** the Commission, within the framework of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and the African Governance Architecture (AGA), to ensure close coordination with the Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (RECs/RMs) in all efforts aimed at promoting national reconciliation, learning from past and ongoing processes and facilitating exchange of experiences;

10. **Urges** all parties to conflicts on the continent to show greater sense of responsibility and strong commitment to the national reconciliation processes, with the purpose of contributing to the emergence of a peaceful Africa, looking forward to a future of prosperity. In this regard, Council **emphasizes** the need to work towards the realization of the objective of ending wars in Africa by 2020, as contained in the Solemn Declaration adopted on the occasion of the OAU/AU 50th Anniversary by the 21st Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union, held in Addis Ababa from 26 to 27 May 2013;

11. **Requests** the Chairperson of the Commission to continue and intensify the efforts already initiated to promote the culture of national reconciliation as an integral and inseparable aspect of the culture of peace, including by placing due emphasis on this issue as part of the «Make Peace Happen» campaign, in line with decision Assembly/AU/Dec.295 (XV) adopted by the Assembly of the Union at its 15th Ordinary Session held in Kampala, from 25 to 27 July 2010, and to report regularly to the Assembly of the Union and the Peace and Security Council on steps and initiatives taken;
12. **Stresses the need** for an AU Framework on national reconciliation and justice, building on relevant instruments, such as the AU Policy Framework on Post-conflict Reconstruction and Development, and initiatives taken in this respect, including those of the Panel of the Wise, in order to guide efforts deployed at national, regional and continental levels to deal with the challenge of conflicts, bearing in mind African specificities. Council **looks forward** to the early finalization of such a Framework, for its dissemination to Member States and other stakeholders throughout the continent;
13. **Further stresses** the important role of the relevant components of the APSA and the AGA, including the AU Panel of the Wise, the Pan-African Network of the Wise - Pan-Wise and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), in the promotion of the culture of reconciliation as a tool for conflict prevention and resolution, as well as peacebuilding;
14. **Pays tribute** to former President Nelson Mandela of South Africa for his unflinching commitment to national reconciliation and outstanding contribution to the emergence of a non- racial democratic system in South Africa, as well as for being a shining example and model worldwide. Council **wishes him** speedy recovery and **expresses solidarity** with the people and the Government of South Africa in these trying moments;
15. **Expresses its deep appreciation** to President Abdelaziz Bouteflika for inviting the Peace and Security Council to hold this important meeting in Algiers and for his invaluable contribution to peace, security and development in Africa. Council **looks forward** to his continued contribution to the achievement of the AU's ideals and objectives;
16. **Decides** to remain seized of the matter and to regularly discuss it on the basis of reports to be submitted by the Chairperson of the Commission.