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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL 494TH MEETING
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA
24 MARCH 2015

PSC/PR/BR.1(CDXCIV)

PRESS STATEMENT

1. The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 494th meeting held on 24 March 2015, was briefed on the situation in South Sudan and the status of the peace process in that country by the Chair of the Mediation Team of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD). Council also followed the statements made by the representatives of South Sudan, as well as of Ethiopia, as Chair of IGAD.
2. Council expressed deep concern at the prevailing situation in South Sudan, characterized by fighting in recent weeks and a serious humanitarian situation. Council strongly condemned all acts of violence in South Sudan and violations of international humanitarian law and human rights.
3. Council, noting with utmost disappointment the failure of the South Sudanese parties to reach an agreement on the outstanding issues by the deadline of 5 March 2015, as set by IGAD, once again, appealed to the South Sudanese Parties to live-up to their commitments under the Agreement of Cessation of Hostilities and to display the required political will and sense of responsibility to bring to an end the untold suffering inflicted upon their people.
4. Council, recalling its earlier pronouncements on the issue of sanctions against those undermining the quest for peace, violating international humanitarian law and obstructing the efforts of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), noted the adoption, on 3 March 2015, by the United Nations (UN) Security Council, of resolution 2206 (2015).
5. Council reiterated its appreciation to the IGAD Chairperson, Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn of Ethiopia, and to the other leaders of the region, for their commitment and tireless efforts in the search for a lasting solution to the conflict in South Sudan, as well as to the IGAD Mediation Team. Council looked forward to the next steps envisaged by IGAD for the resumption of the negotiations. Council expressed appreciation to the UN and other international partners for their continued support to the ongoing efforts. Council reiterated its support to UNMISS and to the IGAD Monitoring Mechanism, demanding, once again, that the Parties fully cooperate with them.
6. Council welcomed the completion by the Commission of the consultations regarding the composition of the AU High-Level *ad hoc* Committee established pursuant to communique PSC/PR/COMM(CDLXXIV) adopted at its 474th meeting held on 5 December 2014, to strengthen Africa's support to the IGAD mediation. Council urged the *ad hoc* Committee, to be composed of the Heads of State and Government of Algeria, Chad, Nigeria, Rwanda and South Africa, to meet as early as possible to elaborate its terms of reference and determine its work plan in support of IGAD. Council requested the Commission to extend all the necessary support to the *ad hoc* Committee, to enable the AU to fully play its role in the search for a lasting solution to the conflict in South Sudan.