

AFRICAN UNION

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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL 515TH MEETING AT THE LEVEL OF HEADS OF STATE AND
GOVERNMENT

13 JUNE 2015
JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

PSC/PR/COMM.2(DXV)

COMMUNIQUE

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The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 515th meeting held on 13 June 2015, at the level of Heads of State and Government, adopted the following decision on the situation in Burundi:

Council,

1. **Takes note** of the report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the situation in Burundi [PSC/AHG/3(DXV)]. Council **also takes note** of the statement made by the Minister of External Relations and International Cooperation of the Republic of Burundi, as well as of the interventions by President Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete of the United Republic of Tanzania, in his capacity as Chairman of the East African Community (EAC), and the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN);
2. **Recalls** its earlier communiqués and press statements on the situation in Burundi, including communiqué PSC/PR/COMM(DVH), adopted at its 507th meeting held on 14 May 2015, as well as the press releases and statements by the Chairperson **of the** Commission. Council **reaffirms** the determination of the AU to fully assume the responsibilities arising from its role as Guarantor of the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement in Burundi of August 2000, concluded after sustained efforts by the region and Africa as a whole, with the support of the international community;
3. **Reiterates its deep appreciation** to the EAC and the leaders of the region for their commitment and sustained efforts to facilitate the search for a lasting political solution to the serious crisis facing Burundi. Council **pays tribute** to the **Special** Envoy of the UN Secretary-General for the Great Lakes region, Said Djinnit, for his commitment and the outstanding efforts that he deployed for the resolution of this crisis. Council **welcomes** the contribution made by the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), including the communiqués issued at the end of their Summits held in Luanda, Angola, and in N'Djamena, Chad, on 18 and 25 May 2015, respectively;
4. **Commends** the Chairperson of the Commission for her commitment and determination to facilitate a political solution to the crisis in Burundi, as well as for all the initiatives she has taken to that end;
5. **Expresses its deep concern** about the continuing stalemate in Burundi, despite the sustained efforts by the EAC, the ICGLR, the AU and the UN, with the support of bilateral and multilateral partners. Council **notes with disappointment** that the political dialogue initiated by the UN Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region, with the participation of the EAC, the ICGLR and the AU, has not produced the expected results. Council **stresses** that the current situation could jeopardize the important gains recorded following the signing of the Arusha Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Burundi and the Global Ceasefire Agreement of 2003, and affect the stability of the region;
6. **Reaffirms** the AU's conviction that only dialogue and consensus, based on the respect of the Arusha Agreement and the Constitution of Burundi, will make it possible to find a lasting political solution, ensuring the preservation and consolidation of peace, as well as the strengthening of democracy and the rule of law. Council **once again calls upon** all the Burundian actors to show restraint and to place the national interest above all other considerations;
7. **Reiterates its concern** about the difficult situation of the Burundian refugees who fled their country

towards the neighbouring States, **commends** the host countries (Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Tanzania), as well as the humanitarian agencies, for their support to the concerned populations, and **calls upon** the international community to provide the necessary humanitarian assistance. Council **urges** the Government of Burundi to create the necessary conditions for their early return;

8. **Stresses** the imperative need for respect for human rights and public freedoms, as guaranteed by the Constitution of Burundi. Council **reiterates** the strong condemnation by the AU of all acts of violence and human rights abuses;

9. **Reiterates its support** to the sustained efforts being deployed by the EAC and **emphasizes** the relevance of the measures agreed upon by the Summits held in Dar-es-Salaam, on 13 and 31 May 2015, including the call for the postponement of the elections and the immediate cessation of violence, the disarmament of youth groups affiliated to political parties, the initiation of a dialogue among the Burundian stakeholders, as well as the commitment of the region not to standby in case the situation deteriorates, which provide a framework for a political and consensual solution to the crisis;

10. **Decides**, as a follow-up to its earlier communiqués and press statements and in support to the decisions of the EAC, that the following measures shall be taken to expedite the search for a consensual political solution to the crisis in Burundi:

- (i) the resumption of dialogue between all the Burundian parties within one week following the adoption of the present communiqué, under the facilitation of the AU, the UN, the EAC and the ICGLR, with the support of the concerned members of the international community. Council **invites** the Chairperson of the Commission to immediately initiate the necessary consultations for the operationalization of this international facilitation, under the auspices of the Chair of the EAC;
- (ii) the inter-Burundian dialogue, building on the work already done with the facilitation of the UN, shall focus on the measures to be taken to create conditions conducive to the organization of free, fair, transparent and credible elections, as well as on all the matters on which the parties disagree;
- (iii) the date of the election shall be set by consensus between the Burundian parties, in the spirit of the EAC communiqués of 31 May 2015 requesting a postponement of the elections, and on the basis of a technical assessment to be undertaken by the UN;
- (iv) the immediate deployment of AU human rights observers and other civilian personnel, as agreed in communiqué PSC/PR/COMM(DVII). Council **reiterates its call** to the Government of Burundi to extend its full cooperation to this process;
- (v) the deployment of AU military experts, both from the region and other regions of the continent, in collaboration with the Government and other concerned actors, to verify the process of disarming the militias and other armed groups. This group of experts, whose strength shall be determined by the Chairperson of the Commission, in consultation with the region, will submit regular reports on the implementation of the disarmament process; and
- (vi) the deployment of an AU election observer mission, if conditions for the organization of free, fair, transparent and credible elections, in accordance with the African Charter on

Democracy, Elections and Governance, are met;

11. **Looks forward** to the visit to Burundi of the EAC ministerial delegation, in pursuance of the communique of the Dar-es-Salaam Summit of 31 May 2015. Council **decides** to dispatch, by the first week of July 2015, a ministerial delegation including the Commission, to assess the implementation status of the decisions contained in paragraph 10 above and enable it to take the decisions that may be required, including determining the way forward, should the parties not reach an agreement within a period of two weeks after the launching of the dialogue;
12. **Reaffirms** its determination to take, in due course, and with the support of the UN Security Council, all the necessary measures against the Burundian stakeholders whose action may lead to the perpetuation of violence and would impede the search for a political solution;
13. **Welcomes the measures** taken by the Chairperson of the Commission to strengthen the AU Liaison Office in Bujumbura, as a follow-up to the relevant provisions of communique PSC/PR/COMM(DVII). Council **welcomes** the appointment of Professor Ibrahima Fall, as the new Special Representative of the Chairperson of the Commission for the Great Lakes region and Head of the AU Liaison Office in Bujumbura. Council **assures** him of its full support in the fulfilment of his mandate;
14. **Requests** the Chairperson of the Commission to formally transmit the present communique to the Government of Burundi and to the other concerned actors. Council **also requests** her to transmit this communique to all concerned regional organizations, to the UN Secretary-General and, through him, to the UN Security Council, as well as to the European Union (EU), to mobilize their support. In particular, Council **requests** the UN Security Council to endorse the present communique;
15. **Invites** the Chairperson of the Commission to keep Council regularly informed of the evolution of the situation to enable it to take the necessary measures;
16. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.