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**PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL 626TH MEETING
19 SEPTEMBER 2016 NEW YORK, USA**

PSC/AH G/COM M. (DCXXVI)

COMMUNIQUE

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The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), at its 626th meeting held on 19 September 2016, at the level of Heads of State and Government, adopted the following decision on the situation in South Sudan:

Council,

1. **Takes note** of the briefings provided by the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, Ambassador Smail Chergui, and the AU High Representative for South Sudan, former President Alpha Oumar Konare, on the situation in South Sudan. Council also **takes note** of the statement made by the representative of the Republic of South Sudan;

2. **Recalls** its previous communiqués and press statements on the situation in South Sudan, in particular, communiqué [PSC/PR/1(DCXVI)] adopted at its 616th meeting held on 11 August 2016, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, as well as the decision of the 27th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union on the situation in South Sudan, also held in Kigali, Rwanda, on 18 July 2016;

3. **Expresses its satisfaction** with the efforts, in very challenging circumstances, of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), IGAD-Plus, including the AU High-Level *ad hoc* Committee for South Sudan, the AU High Representative for South Sudan, former President Alpha Oumar Konare, and the Chairman of the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (JMEC), former President Festus Mogae, to restore peace in South Sudan;

4. **Reiterates** that the situation in South Sudan has serious implications for regional peace and stability and **stresses** that the only path to the resolution of the conflict in South Sudan is through political dialogue;

5. **Welcomes** the joint communiqué issued on 4 September 2016, by the Transitional Government of National Unity of South Sudan (TGoNU) and the Members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), following a field mission of the UNSC to South Sudan. Council **requests** the AU Commission to finalize consultations with the TGoNU to enable it undertake its own planned field mission to South Sudan, as soon as possible;

6. **Urges once again** the parties to the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (ARCSS) signed in August 2015, to foster mutual trust, uphold the interest of their country and its people above any other consideration and to scrupulously implement the ARCSS;

7. **Calls upon** all the regional and international stakeholders to support the implementation of the ARCSS and to encourage all efforts to ensure peace in South Sudan, in

support to TGoNU. Furthermore, Council **underscores** the importance of, also, addressing the economic and developmental dimensions of the conflict;

8. **Further underscores** the importance of promoting reconciliation, healing and national unity to ensure sustainable peace, stability and development in South Sudan. Council further **stresses the need to**

hold those who committed atrocities accountable in order to end and prevent impunity in future;

9. **Further reiterates** the importance of taking advantage of all available African capabilities to address the situation in South Sudan, in particular, African peacekeeping capacities of Member States ready to adequately participate in the proposed Regional Protection Force (RPF);
10. **Underlines** the importance of deploying the RPF, pursuant to UN Security Council resolution 2304 (2016) of 12 August 2016, and in total coordination with TGoNU, with a view to reaching a consensus on all the details related to forming the RPF, as well as its deployment, mandate and areas of operation, within the framework of the ruling principles of peacekeeping, and enabling the RPF to fulfill its mandate;
11. **Urges** the TGoNU to avail the revised Matrix on the implementation of the ARCSS to all relevant stakeholders in order to assess the implications thereof;
12. **Welcomes** the readiness of Arab Republic of Egypt to actively participate in the RPF in South Sudan;
13. **Stresses on the necessity** of reaching an enhanced coordination between the UNSC, PSC, IGAD and the African non-permanent Members of the UNSC (A3), in order to reach consensus on the details and measures of deploying the RPF;
14. **Encourages** the operational coordination between the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and RPF to achieve peace and stability in South Sudan, and to avoid any duplication in their mandates;
15. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.