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**PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL 782<sup>th</sup> MEETING NOUAKCHOTT, MAURITANIA 27 JUNE 2018**

**PSC/MIN/COMM.1(DCCLXXXII)**

The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), meeting in its 782<sup>nd</sup> meeting at Ministerial level, held on 27 June 2018, adopted the following decision on the situation in Mali and the Sahel.

**The Council,**

1. **Takes note** of the Information Note on the harmonisation of Initiatives and the operationalisation of the African Peace and Security Architecture in the Sahel. Council **also takes note** of the introductory remarks of Mr. Alie Kabba, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Republic of Sierra Leone, Chairman of the Council for the month of June 2018, as well as the presentation made by the Commissioner for Peace and Security, Ambassador Smail Chergui and the remarks made by former President Pierre Buyoya, High Representative of the AU for Mali and the Sahel. Council **also takes note** of the Statements made by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Niger, the country chairing the G5-Sahel, the representative of the Economic Community of West African States, the Special Representative of the United Nations for West Africa and the Sahel, the representative of the European Union (EU);

2. **Recalls** the relevant provisions of the Protocol on the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, particularly its Article 16, as well as the Memorandum of Understanding of 2008 between the AU and the Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, the basis of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA);

3. **Recalls also** its previous decisions on the Situation in Mali and in the Sahel Region, in particular the Communiqué PSC/AHG/COMM.CDLXXXIV of its 484<sup>th</sup> meeting, held on 29 January 2015, at the level of Heads of State and Government, authorising the deployment of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) against Boko Haram, Communiqué PSC/PR/ COMM\_DCLXXIX) of its 679<sup>th</sup> meeting, held on 13 April 2017, in which it endorsed the G5 Sahel Joint Force and authorised its deployment for an initial period of twelve (12) months, renewable, as well as the Communiqué PSC/ PR/COMM (DCCLIX) of its 759<sup>th</sup> meeting, held on 23 March 2018, by which it decided to extend the mandate of this Force for twelve (12) additional months. Council **also recalls** the Communiqués PSC/PR/COMM (DCCXXXIII) and PSC/PR/COMM. DCCLXVII of its 733<sup>rd</sup> and 767<sup>th</sup> meetings, held respectively on 13 November 2017 and 28 April 2018 on Emerging Regional Initiatives within the framework of APSA.

4. **Reiterates its deep concern about** the continuing deterioration of the security situation in Mali and the Sahel region in general, in particular because of the persistence of terrorist attacks in northern and central Mali, Burkina Faso as well as in the border region between Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger;

5. **Strongly condemns** the terrorist attacks against the civilian populations, the Defence and Security Forces of the countries of the region and the international forces present in Mali, particularly those of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) ) and Operation Barkhane. Council **deeply deplores** the many losses in human life resulting from these despicable terrorist attacks;

6. **Takes further note with deep concern** that the presence of terrorist and criminal groups in the central part of Mali and at the borders between Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger is clearly contributing to the exacerbation of inter-community tension in these areas, thus threatening the cohesion and peaceful coexistence among the components of the national community;

7. **Stresses** the importance of the early resolution of the crisis in Mali through efforts to ensure lasting peace and security in the Sahel. In this regard, Council **reaffirms** the need for an accelerated implementation of the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, issuing from the Algiers process,

as an inclusive and consensual framework likely to enable the Malian parties to find solutions to their disputes;

8. **Stresses further** the need for the search for a lasting solution to the Libyan crisis, which has lasted for too long, as an essential element in the response to the situation in the Sahelo- Saharan region;

9. **Expresses its appreciation** to the countries of the region, through ECOWAS, ECCAS, the partners, particularly the United Nations and the European Union, for the initiatives and strategies put in place to contribute to the preservation of peace, security and stability of the countries of the region in the face of the scourges of terrorism and transnational organised crime, which pose a serious threat to peace, security and stability in the Sahel. In this regard, Council **commends** the efforts of the AU Commission, through the deployment of the African-led Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA) in northern Mali, the establishment of MISAHHEL, the launching of the Nouakchott Process, the establishment of the MNJTF in the Lake Chad Region, as well as support for the establishment of the G5-Sahel Joint Force, which bear testimony to the will and determination of Africa to take up the multifaceted challenges in the Sahel Region, within the framework of the APSA;

10. **Reaffirms** the need to further strengthen the coordination of the security effort within the framework of the APSA and to do everything to this end, so that the initiatives of the G5- Sahel Joint Force and the MNJTF, while preserving the flexibility and adaptability that underpin their effectiveness, fit better into the Architecture, in conformity with the relevant PSC decisions, particularly the Communiqué of the 767<sup>th</sup> meeting of council, held on 71 April 2018. In this regard, Council **requests** the Commission to make the necessary arrangements for the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding between the AU Commission and the G5-Sahel Secretariat, signed on 23 March 2018, including regular reports of the G5- Sahel to Council;

11. **Reiterates its appreciation** for the initiatives of the international community, especially the Regional Economic Communities, the United Nations, the European Union and other bilateral and multilateral partners, who make sustained efforts to promote peace, security and development in the Sahel;

12. **Reiterates** the provisions of paragraph 8 of its Communiqué of 23 March 2018, concerning the need for the G5 Sahel Force to have predictable and sustainable resources to carry out its mission in the service of international peace and security and **requests** the Commission, in close cooperation with the African members of the Security Council, to continue consultations to this end. Council **expresses its gratitude** to the Government of Rwanda for the contribution made to the operationalisation of this Force and **calls for** the solidarity of the other countries of the continent. Council **also reiterates its gratitude** to the international community as a whole for its support to the initiative of the G5-Sahel countries and **stresses** the need for States and organisations that have made pledges to honour them as soon as possible in order to help the G5 Sahel Joint Force to fulfill its mandate under the best possible conditions. In this regard, Council **requests** the Chairperson of the Commission to undertake the necessary consultations to follow up the pledges, in close cooperation with the G5-Sahel Permanent Secretariat;

13. **Reiterates** the need to ensure predictable and sustainable funding for the collective effort against terrorism, violent extremism and transnational crime in the Sahelo-Saharan Region and the reconfiguration of MINUSMA, without generating additional force to establish an autonomous brigade within the Mission, modeled on the MONUSCO Intervention Brigade, tasked with combating terrorist and criminal groups in northern Mali;

14. **Reiterates** the need for a holistic approach to multifaceted challenges, beyond military and security exigencies, in particular by meeting the expectations of peoples in terms of livelihoods, education, especially for girls and women, jobs for youths, promotion and protection of human rights. In this regard, Council **stresses** the imperative need for national policies to combat marginalisation, which can trigger radicalisation and violent extremism;

15. **Also reaffirms** the importance for AU member states to show greater solidarity, with a view to mobilising the necessary resources from the continent and other partners to further support the Sahel and the lake Chad Basin countries, in their efforts to combat terrorism and violent extremism and to become more involved in supporting programmes for economic development and post-conflict reconstruction, within the framework of the priorities determined by the Sahel States themselves. Council **stresses** the need for African ownership of initiatives in favour of the Sahel countries;

16. **Requests** the Commission to take the necessary steps to reactivate the Nouakchott Process, an appropriate framework for the promotion of peace and security in the Sahelo- Saharan Region, with a view to federating and effectively supporting ongoing efforts in the region, especially within the framework of the G5 Sahel and the MNJTF. In conformity with the relevant conclusions of the Sahel Strategic Consultative Meeting, held in Nouakchott, from 28 to 29 March 2018, Council **further requests** the Commission to take the necessary steps to facilitate the review of the AU Strategy for the Sahel, not only to adapt it to the new political-institutional and security context of the region, but also to promote functional cooperation between the various actors;

17. **Welcomes** the efforts already made by the African Union Mission for Mali and the Sahel (MISAHEL), under the leadership of H.E Mr. Pierre Buyoya, former President of Burundi, for the coordination of initiatives in the Sahel, including through the Ministerial Coordination Platform (MCP) as well as the preparation of a Framework Document to combat radicalisation and violent extremism in the Sahel. Council **requests** the Commission to support these initiatives and strengthen MISAHEL by providing it with the necessary human and financial resources to fulfill its mandate;

18. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.