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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL 800™ MEETING

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA 10 OCTOBER 2018

PSC/PR/COMM. 3(DCCC)

COMMUNIQUE

The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), at its 800th meeting held on 10 October 2018, adopted the following decision on the situation in South Sudan:

Council,

1. **Takes note** of the briefings made by Ambassador Smail Chergui, the Commissioner for Peace and Security, Dr Specioza Wandira Kazibwe, Member of the Panel of the Wise and Co-Chair of FemWise, Jean-Pierre Lacroix, the UN Under Secretary General for Peacekeeping and Dr. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, the UN Under Secretary General and Executive Director for UN Women following the AU-UN Mission to South Sudan, from 7 to 9 October 2018. Council also **takes note** of the statements made by the representatives of the Ethiopia in its capacity of Chair of Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and African Member in the UN Security Council;
2. **Commends** the South Sudanese parties for the signing of the Revitalized Agreement and **recognizes** that it remains the only viable option towards addressing the current political, social, economic and security challenges facing South Sudan and ensuring lasting peace;
3. **Commends** the IGAD leadership, in particular the engagement of President Omar Hassan Bashir, for his dedication and contribution to the promotion of peace, security, stability and reconciliation in South Sudan. Council **notes with appreciation** the fact that the people and Government of South Sudan have expressed support for this Agreement and are determined to contribute positively towards its implementation in order to end the cycle of violence in their country;
4. **Welcomes** the decisions by the opposition parties to endorse and ratify the full text of the signed Revitalized Agreement without any reservations and **encourages** those that may not have done so, to also fully support the Agreement. Furthermore, **welcomes** the appointment, in September 2018, of the 10 members of the National Pre-Transitional Committee (NPTC) tasked with the oversight and coordination of the implementation of the activities of the pre-transitional period;
5. **Recognizes** that the overall security situation in South Sudan has improved since the signing of the Revitalized Agreement, and thus **urges** all South Sudanese parties to faithfully abide by the Permanent Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements signed on 7 June 2018 and that came into effect on 1 July 2018, to facilitate the operationalization of the Transitional Security Arrangements and the voluntary repatriation, resettlement, rehabilitation and reintegration of returnees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs);
6. **Commends** President Salva Kiir Mayardit for issuing Republican Order No. 17, on 7 September 2018, for the implementation of the Permanent Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements as per the provisions of the Revitalized Agreement. Council **calls on** the South Sudanese armed movements to

reciprocate this order by releasing all the prisoners of war and detainees with immediate effect, ceasing the training of any recruits immediately, and **urges** them to direct all their forces to refrain from revenge attacks and retaliations. Council further **urges** all South Sudanese forces to publicize the names of the released detainees in order to build trust and confidence amongst the population that the war has ended;

7. **Further commends** the Government's pronouncement on the plan to reunify the South Sudanese armed forces into a single army and **welcomes** the renaming of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) as the South Sudan People's Defence Forces (SSPDF), as an initial step towards creating an inclusive national army;

8. **Encourages** the parties to convene both the National Pre-Transitional Committee and the Permanent Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements (PCTSA) meetings in order to finalize the roadmap for implementing the political tasks of the Pre-Transitional Period, and address issues of VIP security as per security arrangements and preparations for new ministers as per the Agreement. Council **requests** the Parties, together with IGAD and the UN, to finalise the matter relating to the deployment of the Regional Protection Force (RPF), as soon as possible, in order to ensure that the protection of civilians mandate is not compromised. Council **further requests** the AU and the UN to provide technical assistance to these processes, should the Parties request, given that the UN has an overall civilian protection mandate;

9. **Appeals** to all the parties to the conflict to cease all acts of violence in South Sudan and respect for the signed Revitalized Agreement and to remain committed to the peaceful resolution of the conflict. Council **calls on** all the former warring factions to ensure a conducive environment for the return of the IDPs to their areas of origin and **appeals** to UNMISS and international partners to continue to support the return of the refugees in a proper and coordinated manner from countries concerned;

10. **Reiterates its support** and encouragements to the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) for its efforts aimed at ensuring protection of innocent civil population in the challenging conditions of the conflict in South Sudan;

11. **Underscores** that the current Agreement offers the South Sudanese an unparalleled window of opportunity to end war and begin a path towards stabilization and development. Council, therefore, **encourages** the international community, especially the regional countries, to continue to provide financial and other necessary supports this peace process in order to ensure respite from persistent war, hunger and misery for the people of South Sudan;

12. **Underscores** that the women and children are the most vulnerable groups and therefore the most affected by the conflict in South Sudan. Council **notes with satisfaction** that the South Sudanese parties have committed to give due consideration to national diversity, gender and regional

representation in selecting their nominees to the various mechanism outlined in the Agreement.

13. **Welcomes** the outcomes of the AU-UN Joint Mission to South Sudan aimed at expressing support for the Revitalized-Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan, signed by the South Sudanese parties on 12 September 2018, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Council **commends** the Joint AU-UN Mission for underscoring the imperative for the inclusion of women in the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement, as well as ensuring gender parity during the establishment of the various mechanisms, especially security related mechanisms, envisaged in the Revitalized Agreement. Therefore, Council **encourages** the Transitional Government of National Unity of South Sudan to ensure that the provisions of the Transitional Constitution of the South Sudan and the ACRSS on the 35% participation of the women in the Executive shall be observed;

14. **Expresses concern** over the reports of cases of insecurity and violations against women in South Sudan, including rape and confiscation of properties. In this regard, Council **calls on** the Transitional Government of National Unity of South Sudan to fully implement Chapter Five of the Revitalized Agreement to address issues of healing, reconciliation and justice. Council **strongly urges** the AU Commission and the Transitional Government of National Unity of South Sudan to finalization the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to the establishment of the Hybrid Court of South Sudan to ensure accountability;

15. **Also expresses its growing concern** over reports of the prevalent inter-communal violence that has the potential of further destabilizing peace in the country. Council **requests** the Transitional Government of National Unity of South Sudan, in consultation with the UNMISS, to develop a strategy that could assist efforts towards curbing this disturbing phenomenon, including through collection of illegal owned arms/weapons. Council **appeals** that collection illegal owned arms/weapons should be carried out in a balanced manner ensuring that no group feels disadvantaged by such a process;

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