

AFRICAN UNION

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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL 942ND MEETING 28 AUGUST 2020 ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/COMM. (CMXLII)

COMMUNIQUE

Adopted by the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) at its 942nd meeting held on 28 August 2020, on the Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the Activities of the African Union Technical Support Team (AUTSTG) within the context of National Institutional Reforms in The Gambia,

The Peace and Security Council.

Taking note of the Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the Activities of the African Union Technical Support Team (AUTSTG) within the Context of National Institutional Reforms in The Gambia; **also taking note** of the request of The Gambia with regard to the extension of the mandate of the AUTSTG in The Gambia;

Recalling its previous decisions on the situation in The Gambia, in particular, Communique PSC/PR/COMM. (DCXCIV) adopted at its 694th meeting held on 15 June 2017 and communique PSC/PR/COMM.I(DCCCXLIV) adopted at its 844th meeting held on 24 April 2019;

Reaffirming the solidarity of the AU with the people and the Government of The Gambia, in their aspirations to reform national institutions in order to transform their country; **also reaffirming** its commitment for the respect or the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of The Gambia; and

Acting under Article 7 of its Protocol, the Peace and Security Council

1. **Commends** the Government of The Gambia for the progress made in national institutional reforms, in particular revitalization of the already existing security agencies, adoption of the national institutional reform strategy, reform of the security institutions, ensuring the security of the country, as well as efforts in reforming the country's political and socio-economic institutions in order to improve the livelihoods of the citizens;
2. **Encourages** the Government of The Gambia, despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, to sustain the ongoing reforms, that significantly contribute towards promoting stability, as well as economic growth and prosperity in the country;
3. **Appeals** to the Government of The Gambia to implement the validated national documents such as the National Security Policy, National Security Strategy and Security Sector Reform Strategy and ratify all legal instruments relating to Human Rights in order to consolidate the current national efforts aimed at safeguarding security and rights of the citizens;
4. **Commends** the Government of The Gambia for the commitment demonstrated in owning the national institutional reform process, particularly through the allocation of national budget fund; and **urges** the Government of The Gambia to enhance and sustain national ownership of the institutional reform process; **appeals** to all AU Member States and the international community to continue providing technical, financial and the necessary support to The Gambia in implementing the national priority areas in the reform;
5. **Also commends** AU Commission, through the AUTSTG, for its role in providing technical support to the implementation of the national institutional reforms in The Gambia, especially the reform of the security sector, as well as the country's review of relevant legal instruments; in this context, **expresses gratitude** to the Government of The Gambia for its cooperation demonstrated to the AUTSTG in implementing its mandate, in

particular embedding the Team into different Government institutions under reform;

6. **Expresses appreciation** to the efforts deployed by the Economic Community of Western African States (ECOWAS) to the overall national institutional reforms of The Gambia;

7. **Stresses the importance** of the Government of The Gambia sustained role in leading the national institutional reform process, ensure implementation of guidelines on priority areas of the country, working in close collaboration with the AU, ECOWAS and other international partners; in this regard, **calls on** all partners contributing to the reforms process in The Gambia to coordinate their efforts and resources, with a view to ensure coordination and complementarity of actions, harmonize the reform activities and avoid unnecessary duplication, as well as maximize outcomes from the various contributions;

8. **Underlines the need** for the Government of The Gambia, in preparation for the holding of the upcoming national election in 2021, to embrace and implement the AU instruments relating to elections, democracy and good governance, with a view to preparing the ground for holding credible, free and transparent elections;

9. **Decides** to extend the mandate of the AUTGST for an additional period of (4) months, until 31 December 2020, based on the availability of financial resources; **requests** the Chairperson of the AU Commission to continue mobilizing required resources, from the AU Member States, the UN and other international partners, to ensure that the country successfully completes its reform and transformation process and prevent crisis relapse; **expresses gratitude** to the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, for its financial support to the AUTSTG and its activities since its deployment to The Gambia to date;

10. **Also requests** the AU Commission to brief the Council on the activities and mandate of the AUTSTG, including the mobilization of resources, beyond 31 December 2020, when the current mandate expires, for Council's consideration;

11. **Further requests** the Chairperson of the AU Commission, through the African Union Centre for Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development, to explore means and ways to replicate the AUTSTG model of support to AU Member States emerging from crisis/conflicts, which has demonstrated its effectiveness in terms of delivering support, in countries which may request AU support towards postconflict stabilization, institutional reforms, reconstruction and development;

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