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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL 1014<sup>th</sup> MEETING

26 JULY 2021

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/COMM.1014(2021)

COMMUNIQUE

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**Adopted by the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) at its 1014th meeting held on 26 July 2021 on the Early Warning and Continental Security outlook:**

The Peace and Security Council,

**Noting** the opening remarks by H.E. Ambassador Victor Adeleke, Permanent Representative of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Chairperson of the PSC for the month of July 2021 and the statement by the AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, H.E. Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, as well as the presentations by the Executive Secretary of the Committee of Intelligence and Security Services of Africa (CISSA), H.E. Madame Zainab Ali Kotoko; the Executive Director of the AU Mechanism for Police Cooperation (AFRIPOL), Dr. Tarek Sharif, and the Ag. Director of the Africa Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT) Mr. Idriss Lallali;

**Mindful** of the inextricable link between early warning, early response and required capacity, as well as the importance of early warning in enhancing the effectiveness of Council in discharging its mandate of conflict prevention, management and resolution in Africa;

**Faithful** to the provisions of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union in their entirety and specifically Article 12 on anticipation and prevention of conflicts through the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS);

**Reaffirming its commitment** to collaborate with the Committee of Intelligence and Security Services of Africa (CISSA), the African Union Mechanism for Police Cooperation (AFRIPOL), and the African Center for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT), as well as Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs) to support member states in the fight against common threats to peace, security and stability in the Continent;

**Recalling** its previous decisions and pronouncements on early warning and continental security outlook, particularly, Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM. (CMXIV)] adopted at its 914<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 5 March 2020, Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM. (CMI)] adopted at its 901<sup>st</sup> meeting held on 13 December 2019, Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.(DCLXXXVII)] adopted at its 687<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 23 May 2017; and

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

1. **Expresses deep concern** over the growing multi-dimensional threats to peace, security and socio-economic development in Africa including, violent inter-communal conflicts, border disputes, maritime insecurity, and the growing influence of armed groups and non-state actors across the continent; and expansion of terrorists' territory and theatre of operation, increasing convergence of terrorism and transnational organized crime, regionalization and internationalization of domestic conflicts; and **also expresses deep concern** over the fact that the illicit transfer, circulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons sustains and exacerbates armed conflicts and contribute to a series of international humanitarian law and human rights law violations, including forced displacements;
2. **Further expresses deep concern** over the devastating socio-economic impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the Member States, particularly those already affected by the scourge of armed conflict, terrorism and violent extremism, economic sanctions, climate change related forced displacements; in this regard **stresses** the

importance of strengthening the resilience of health infrastructure of Member States to mitigate future health emergencies ;

3. **Deplores** the resurgence of military coups d'etats and unconstitutional changes of governments, in violation of AU normative instruments, particularly the 2000 Lome Declaration on Unconstitutional Changes of Government;

4. **Strongly condemns** the growing trend of election related violence in the Continent, and manipulation of national constitutions to extend term limits; in this regard, **commends** all Member States which have already signed, ratified and domesticated the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance; and **encourages** other Member States, which have not yet done so, to also do the same without further delays;

5. Stresses that terrorism and extremism remain a major threat to peace and security in Africa and major impediment to its prosperity and good governance, and recognizes the threat of terrorism and terrorist groups in conjunction with the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters, arms trade, intercommunal violence and tensions, and use of cyberspace and advanced technology by terrorist and extremist groups and individuals, and thus urges all Member States to continue their efforts to effectively confront the terrorist threat including through intracontinental and regional cooperation and effective implementation of the applicable international and continental instruments and frameworks;

6. **Also strongly condemns** misinformation, hate speech and incitement to hatred and violence including through racial and ethnic profiling and discrimination, and abuse of social media which contributes to inflaming tensions, ethnic divisions, violent inter-communal clashes amongst others; **underscores** the need for vigilance and strengthening of cybersecurity while ensuring respect to human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as concerted efforts towards promoting the use of media for information, education and building social cohesion;

7. **Further strongly condemns** the illegal exploitation and trade of natural resources as well as illicit financial flows in and from the Continent, depriving Member States of much needed resource for economic development and contributing to fueling conflicts; and in this context, **stresses** the need for Member States and non-state actors to adhere to international instruments regulating natural resources;

8. **Calls** for the full implementation of the AU Master Roadmap on the Practical Steps for Silencing the Guns in Africa by 2030 to address challenges related to peace and security;

9. **Notes with concern** the potential threats and risks to peace, security and stability in the Continent posed by emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, digital technologies, **encourages** Member States to invest more in research capacities in this domain, share knowledge and expertise, in order to narrow the technological gaps within the Continent and **also encourages** Member states to develop instruments to regulate and govern new technologies per recognised universal laws;

10. **Urges** Member States and RECs/RMS to redouble their efforts in mitigating climate change and its adverse effects, including scarcity of water sources, environmental degradation, desertification, erratic and extreme weather patterns, cyclones, floods, landslides and drought, fueling forced displacement and violent resource related inter- communal conflicts ; and **encourages** them, working closely with AU partners, to actively pursue holistic approaches towards addressing the fundamental root causes of the various threats to peace and security in Africa;

11. **Emphasizes the importance** of national ownership and leadership, as well as inclusive approaches that promote the effective participation of all key stakeholders, including women, youth, civil society and the private sector in efforts aimed at preventing conflicts and crises in the Continent;
12. **Underscores the need** for strengthening cooperation and collaboration between and among the African Union Member States, RECs/RMs and with the meaningful support by international partners in fighting the various threats to peace, security and stability in Africa, including in accompanying countries in political transitions and post-conflict situations, among others through capacity building, intelligence and information sharing, joint operations and harmonization of laws;
13. **Commends** CISSA, ACSRT and AFRIPOL for the relentless efforts in contributing towards enhancing the capacity of Member States and the AU to more effectively promote peace, security and stability in Africa and **requests them** to continue their horizontal cooperation and to provide an update to Council, as soon as possible, regarding the status of implementation of paragraph 18 of Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.(DCLXXXVII)] adopted by Council at its 687<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 23 May 2017 in which Council requested them to expedite the development and operationalization of the 5-Year Strategic Roadmap for the prevention and combating of terrorism and violent extremism in Africa;
14. **Further requests** CISSA, ACSRT and AFRIPOL to provide quarterly briefings (or immediate in cases of emergency) to Council on emerging threats to peace and security on the Continent in line with their mandates and in keeping with efforts to strengthen conflict prevention and early warning mechanisms of the AU Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), and also to provide updates and analytical assessments on transnational threats where deemed necessary and required;
15. **Requests** the Chairperson of the Commission to mobilize necessary resources to enable the AFRIPOL and ACSRT to more effectively discharge their respective mandates; and

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