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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL 1072ND MEETING 1 APRIL 2022 ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/COMM.1072 (2022)

COMMUNIQUE

Adopted by the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) at its 1072nd meeting on Mine Action in Africa held on 1 April 2022, in commemoration of the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action:

The Peace and Security Council,

Recalling its previous decisions and pronouncements on Mine Action and related thematic areas, particularly Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCCXXVII)] adopted at its 837th meeting held on 4 April 2019, and communiqué PSC/PR/COMM.1032(2021) adopted at its 1032nd meeting held on 16 September 2021; **also recalling the** AU Mine Action and Explosives Remnants of War Strategic Framework;

Highlighting the critical importance of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC), the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) and the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) in strengthening and upholding the norms against explosive weapons on the Continent;

Faithful to Resolution CM/Res 1593 on the “UN Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and Problems Posed by the Proliferation of Anti-Personnel Mines in Africa”, adopted at the 62nd Ordinary Session of the OAU Council of Ministers, in June 1995, which, *inter alia*, called for the total ban of anti-personnel landmines and the universalization of the relevant legally binding instruments, as well as endorsed measures to address the impact of landmines and the developments that led to the adoption of the Common African Positions on landmines; **also mindful** of Decision CM/Dec.363 (LXVI) adopted by the 66th Ordinary Session of the Council of Ministers in May 1997 in Harare, Zimbabwe;

Stressing that the Common African Position on Anti-personnel Mines adopted by the 2nd Continental Conference of African Experts in September 2004 and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) adopted in July 2017 are instruments adopted to guide Member States to comprehensively prohibit and totally eliminate Nuclear Weapons;

Noting the statement of H.E. Evariste Ndayishimiye, President of the Republic of Burundi, delivered on his behalf by Ambassador Willy Nyamitwe, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Burundi to the African Union and Chairperson of the PSC for the month of April 2022, and the presentation by Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security; **also noting** the statements by the representatives of the United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC); and

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

1. **Welcomes** the progress made by Member States in clearing areas under their jurisdiction contaminated by anti-personnel landmines and explosive remnants of war and **encourages** them to continue with their efforts; **takes note** of the commitments of Member States demonstrated through the development of national programmes to address the threat of landmines and explosive remnants of war;
2. **Commends** those Member States that have fulfilled their mine clearance obligations to ensure that anti-personnel mines no longer cause death or disability to the populations in their territories, **encourages** those that have not yet done so to do the same in order to contribute to the efforts aimed at

creating a landmine-free Africa and **calls on** non-state actors to respect international mine ban conventions and treaties;

3. **Takes note with serious concern** of the continued use of anti-personnel landmines in some parts of the world, including the use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) by non-state armed groups and terrorist groups, which jeopardizes the continental efforts aimed at creating a landmine-free Africa; in this regard, **strongly condemns** the use of anti-personnel landmines, **pays tribute** to the victims of landmines and IEDs and **wishes** a speedy recovery to the injured;

4. **Expresses deep concern over** the threat posed by explosive remnants of war, as well as unsecured or ageing explosives and their devastating impacts on human lives, particularly children; in this regard, in addition to the existing measures, **urges** Member States to redouble their efforts to ensure that steps are undertaken to securely store state-owned explosives and to safely destroy obsolete ones; and **requests** the AU Commission and partners to continue providing technical support to Member States in their clearance efforts towards the implementation of the Convention;

5. **Emphasizes** the importance of sustained awareness-raising programmes on the dangers of landmines for affected communities and **underscores** the need for these programmes to include the youth, women, media, community leaders and civil society, among others, with a view to ensuring national ownership and sustainability;

6. **Underscores** the need for Member States and the international community to support rehabilitation centres for victims of anti-personnel mines, including post-conflict reconstruction and development programmes, to address the socio-economic challenges faced by victims and ensure that Africa is a safe home;

7. **Notes** the challenges posed by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic to demining efforts and **requests** the AU Commission, with the support of the Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs) and partners, to work closely with Member States to establish a mechanism to address this challenge as well as ensure that demining activities are fully implemented and mine action is incorporated into activities aimed at silencing the guns;

8. **Stresses** the need to establish a continental mechanism for mine action to coordinate the efforts of Member States; and **encourages** Member States to share expertise in mine clearance and cooperation on border security to address threats posed by anti-personnel landmines;

9. **Takes note** of the mine action funding gap at the national, regional and continental levels, which poses a challenge to Member States in meeting their clearance deadlines; in this regard, **requests** the Commission to work closely with Member States and partners to mobilize funds to support the implementation of activities aimed at clearing contaminated areas, and supporting land mine survivors to address the devastating effects of Anti-personnel land mines and explosive remnants of war;

10. **Requests** the Commission, with the support of the RECs/RMs and partners, to organize an advocacy forum for Member States and all stakeholders to exchange views and share experiences on

addressing threats posed by mine action in Africa; and **reiterates** its call to the Commission to finalize the AU Mine Action and Counter-IED Strategies to be submitted to the PSC for consideration;

11. **Underscores** the need to include the participation of victims of anti-personnel landmines in the PSC meetings on mine action, as well as in the activities of the Commission;

12. **Underlines** the need to ensure the full implementation of the Maputo Action Plan with the support of the RECs/RMs and partners in order to attain the goal of a landmine-free world by 2025, **emphasizes** the need for Member States to fulfil their obligations pursuant to Article 5 of the Convention relating to the destruction of anti-personnel mines and further **encourages** Member States to submit their reports on the implementation of the Maputo Action Plan and Ottawa Convention in accordance with Article 7 of the latter;

13. **Appeals** to those Member States that have not yet done so, to sign and ratify the Anti- Personnel Mine Ban Convention and ensure its full implementation-

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