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P.O. Box: 3243, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Tel.:(251-11) 551 38 22 Fax: (251-11) 551 93 21
Email: situationroom@africa-union.org, oau-ews@ethionet.et

PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
254TH MEETING
ADDIS ABEBA, ETHIOPIE
21 DECEMBER 2010

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PRESS STATEMENT

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The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 254th meeting, held on 21 December 2010, was briefed by the Commissioner for Peace and Security on the latest developments in the situation in Côte d'Ivoire and the evolution of AU's efforts. Council also followed communications from representatives of Burkina Faso, on behalf of the Facilitator of the Inter-Ivoirian Direct Dialogue, and Nigeria, on behalf of the current Chair of ECOWAS.

Council reiterated its previous statements and decisions, especially the communiqué issued by its 252nd meeting held on 9 December 2010, and expressed its deep concern at the continuing stalemate in Côte d'Ivoire and the risk of large scale violence in that country, as a result of the refusal of Mr. Laurent Gbagbo to peacefully and immediately hand over power to the President elect, Mr. Alassane Ouattara. Council also strongly condemned the atrocities and other violations of human rights committed in different parts of Côte d'Ivoire. Council called on all concerned actors, particularly the defense and security forces, to assume their responsibility for the protection of civilian populations.

Council reiterated its determination to take appropriate measures, in due course, against all those who persist in undermining the will of the people, incite violence and commit violations of human rights.

Council welcomed the adoption, on 20 December 2010, by the UN Security Council, of resolution 1962 (2010), which, among others, renewed the mandate of the UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) until 30 June 2011. Council requested all parties concerned to extend full cooperation to UNOCI in the discharge of its mandate.

Council welcomed the initiatives taken by the Chairperson of the Commission, including the mission he undertook to Abidjan, in close cooperation with ECOWAS, on 17 December 2010. Council encouraged the Chairperson of the Commission to continue with and intensify his efforts, including by facilitating dialogue between all concerned parties, in order to find a peaceful solution that will preserve peace in Côte d'Ivoire and respect the results of the presidential election, as recognized by the international community.

Council decided to remain seized of the matter.

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