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PRESS RELEASE

THE AFRICAN UNION WELCOMES THE SUCCESSFUL HOLDING OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL REFERENDUM IN THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC AND WARNS THE ACTORS WHO SEEK TO HINDER THE COMPLETION OF THE TRANSITION

Addis Ababa, 18 December 2015: The Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union (AU), Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, welcomes the successful holding of the constitutional referendum which took place in the Central African Republic (CAR) on 13 and 14 December 2015. This referendum marks a crucial stage in the ongoing transition in the CAR, which was extended until 30 March 2016 by the Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), held in Libreville on 25 November 2015.

The Chairperson of the Commission salutes the courage and commitment of the people of the CAR to the completion of the transition, within the agreed timelines, with the holding, on 27 December 2015, of the 1st round of the simultaneous presidential and legislative elections, it being understood that a second round may be held on 30 January 2016. She notes, in this regard, that nearly 2 million CAR people, that is 95% of potential voters, have registered in the voter's roll, thereby demonstrating their deep desire to open a new chapter in their country's turbulent history. She congratulates the transitional authorities for their facilitation of the referendum. She commends the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Mission for Stabilization in the CAR (MINUSCA) for its outstanding support towards the successful holding of the referendum. She reiterates the AU's full support to MINUSCA towards the fulfillment of its mandate.

The Chairperson of the Commission firmly condemns the criminal and futile attempts by the anti-Balaka and ex-Seleka elements belonging to the "Popular Front for the Renaissance of the Central African Republic (FPRC)" to prevent the CAR people from voting, as well as to undermine the efforts to promote peace and reconciliation. She equally strongly condemns attacks against MINUSCA personnel and all incitements of violence by these armed groups. She expresses the AU's total rejection of the statement released by the FPRC announcing the creation of a so-called 'Republic of Logone'. She stresses that this statement is null and void and has no effect whatsoever, and that its authors will be held accountable for their acts, which constitute a threat to the unity and territorial integrity of the CAR. She urges the Security Council, in accordance with its resolution 2196 (2015), to fully assume its responsibilities by taking all necessary measures against all those who threaten peace and reconciliation in the CAR, including by attempting to undermine the unity and territorial integrity of the CAR.

The Chairperson of the Commission reiterates the AU's support for the ongoing transition and its commitment to contribute to its successful completion. She calls on the international community to continue to support the authorities and the people of the CAR, including in the post-election period, so as to consolidate the hard-won gains and successfully ensure lasting peace, security and stability in the CAR.

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The African Union Welcomes The Successful Holding Of The Constitutional Referendum In The Central African Republic And Warns The Actors Who Seek To Hinder The Completion Of The Transition

Peace and Security

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