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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
348TH MEETING
13 DECEMBER 2012
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/COMM.1(CCCXLVIII)

PRESS STATEMENT

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The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 348th meeting held on 13 December 2012, received briefings on the situation in Mali from the Commissioner for Peace and Security and the AU High Representative for Mali and the Sahel. Council also followed the statements made by the representatives of Mali, the Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU), as well as by Mali's neighbors, AU member States seating in the UN Security Council and permanent members of that organ.

Council reaffirmed the need for sustained efforts by both the Malian actors and the international partners, in order to expedite the resolution of the multidimensional crisis facing Mali, recalling, in this regard, the relevance of the Strategic Concept for the Resolution of the Crises in Mali endorsed at its 339th meeting held on 24 October 2012, which is meant to structure the efforts of Africa and the rest of the international community in support of Mali.

Council strongly condemned the conditions under which the resignation of outgoing Prime Minister Cheick Modibo Diarra occurred. Council, once again, reiterated the imperative for the military and security forces to operate under the civilian authority and the need for these institutions to focus on their primary task, as provided for in the Malian Constitution, and demanded that they stop interfering in the political process, in conformity to the decisions of the PSC and relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council.

Council, having reiterated the centrality of an inclusive and coherent transition, under the authority of the Interim President, Mr. Traoré Dioncounda, for the successful conclusion of the ongoing efforts, noted with satisfaction the appointment by the Interim President of a new Prime Minister in the person of Mr. Diango Cissoko. Council also took note of the ongoing consultations for the formation of a Government of consensus resolutely committed to the achievement of two fundamental objectives of the Transition, namely, the full and effective restoration of State authority throughout the national territory and the holding of free, transparent and credible elections. In this context, Council urged the Malian actors to organize, as soon as possible, and in the required conditions of inclusiveness, the envisaged national consultations that should lead to the adoption of a Roadmap for the management of the Transition, and expressed AU's readiness, in particular through its High Representative, Pierre Buyoya, to assist in this respect and to mobilize the international community.

Council took note of the submission by the UN Secretary-General of the report requested under paragraph 7 of resolution 2071 (2012), as well as of the public debate that the Security Council members had on this matter on 5 December 2012. Council, once again, urged the Security Council, in accordance with the requests made by the AU pursuant to Council's decisions of 24 October and 13 November 2012, to give its full support to the Strategic Concept for the Resolution of Crises in Mali, to authorize the early deployment of the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (MISMA) and the establishment of a support package

funded through UN assessed contributions, as well as the establishment of a Trust Fund to support the Malian armed and security forces.

Council noted with satisfaction the efforts of the ECOWAS Mediator to facilitate the negotiations between the Government of Mali and the Malian armed groups willing to seek a peaceful solution within the strict framework of the principles of the AU. Council urged him to pursue his efforts, in coordination with all other stakeholders, including the core countries.

Council stressed that issues of democratic governance, as well as the negotiation process and the deployment of AFISMA go hand-in-hand, and are mutually reinforcing, and that determined efforts should be made on these two tracks.

Council also appealed for the mobilization of humanitarian aid to assist the increasing numbers of refugees in the neighboring countries and Internally Displaced Persons within Mali.

Council commended the AU High Representative for Mali and the Sahel, former President Pierre Buyoya, for his ongoing efforts in pursuance of his mandate. In particular, Council welcomed the visits he undertook to Mali and the countries of the region, as well as the contacts that he has established with international partners, notably the United Nations.

Council agreed to remain actively seized of the matter.

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