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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **THE AFRICAN UNION STRONGLY CONDEMNS THE TERRORIST ATTACKS IN NORTHERN MALI AND REITERATES ITS FULL SUPPORT FOR MINUSMA**

**Addis Ababa, 4 October 2014:** The Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union (AU), Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, is following with deep concern the evolution of the security situation in northern Mali, which has been marked in the past weeks by an upsurge of terrorist attacks, including those targeting the forces of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). In this regard, she strongly condemns the criminal and heinous attack perpetrated yesterday in the Gao region, during which nine peacekeepers from the Niger contingent of MINUSMA were killed, as well as the attacks that took place during the month of September 2014 in the region of Kidal, resulting in the death of ten Chadian soldiers.

The Chairperson of the Commission extends the AU's heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims of these terrorist acts, as well as to the Governments of Chad and Niger, hailing their continued commitment and that of the other troop and police contributing countries to the promotion of peace and security in Mali. She wishes speedy recovery to the many soldiers who sustained injuries as a result of the attacks carried out by the terrorist groups. The Chairperson of the Commission renews the AU's full support to MINUSMA, and acknowledges the immense sacrifices made by the uniformed personnel deployed on the ground in the discharge of their mandate. She calls for the mobilization of additional international support in favor of the Mission to enable it more effectively address the situation on the ground.

The Chairperson of the Commission notes that the intensification of the attacks against MINUSMA is occurring at a time when the negotiations undertaken within the framework of the Algiers Process, with a view to finding a political solution to the crisis affecting

northern Mali, will soon enter a decisive phase. She urges the armed movements active in this part of the country to provide all necessary assistance to MINUSMA to better prevent attacks against the Mission, in accordance with the commitments they made in their 16 September 2014 Algiers Declaration. The Chairperson of the Commission also urges the armed movements, as well as other relevant stakeholders, to fully cooperate with the Algerian Mediation, supported by the countries of the region and the larger international community, including the AU, to facilitate the early conclusion of the negotiations and the stabilization of northern Mali. She stresses that the situation of anarchy that prevails in this part of the country creates a breeding ground for the worsening of the scourge of terrorism and transnational organized crime.

The Chairperson of the Commission calls for an enhanced action against terrorism and transnational organized crime, as a follow-up to the communiqué adopted by the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) at its meeting held in Nairobi, on 2 September 2014. In particular, she urges the countries of the region to seize the opportunity of the 6th meeting of their Heads of Intelligence and Security Services, scheduled to take place in Dakar, on 13 and 14 November 2014, within the framework of the Nouakchott Process on the Enhancement of Security Cooperation and the Operationalization of the African Peace and Security Architecture in the Sahel-Saharan Region, to agree on additional measures, in order to enhance the effectiveness of their collective efforts, including through further cooperation with MINUSMA.

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