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P. O. Box 3243, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia Tel.: (251-11) 551 38 22 Fax: (251-11) 519321
Email: situationroom@africa-union.org

PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
750TH MEETING
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA
6 FEBRUARY 2018

PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCL)

COMMUNIQUÉ

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The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 750th meeting held on 6 February 2018, adopted the following decision on the activities of the AU High-Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) for Sudan and South Sudan:

Council,

1. **Takes note** of the comprehensive and valuable briefing by the Chairperson of the AUHIP on the activities of the Panel in fulfillment of its mandate, particularly: its engagements in support to the Sudanese and South Sudanese Parties on the implementation of the Cooperation Agreement, 2012; its support for the negotiations to end conflict in Darfur and the Two Areas of Blue Nile and South Kordofan, as well as national political processes to resolve Sudan's challenges; and on its efforts, working with IGAD, to deepen collective analysis of the challenges facing the Horn of Africa. Council **further takes note** of the statements made by the Permanent Representatives of Sudan and South Sudan, as well as Ethiopia in its capacity as the Chair of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and African Member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), and by Cote d'Ivoire, in its capacity as an African member of the UNSC;
2. **Commends** the work of the Panel and **pays tribute** to its members, namely former President Thabo Mbeki of South African; former President Abdulsalami Abubakar of Nigeria; and former President Pierre Buyoya of Burundi, and their support staff for their unwavering commitment and untiring efforts towards achieving peace in Sudan and South Sudan, as well as in the promotion of peace, security and stability in the Horn of Africa. Council **also commends** the Chair of IGAD, Prime Minister Haile Mariam Desalegn of Ethiopia, for his continued engagement and support to the efforts of the Panel;
3. **Welcomes** the appointment of the AU High Representative for *Silencing the Guns*, Ambassador Ramtane Lamamra, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Algeria, as a new member of the AUHIP. Council **recognizes** the significant experience, knowledge and skills that Mr. Lamamra will bring to the discharge of the Panel's mandate;
4. **Expresses** its appreciation for the role of the Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General, Nicholas Haysom, in support to the AU; the Joint Special Representative, for the United Nations and AU Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), Jeremiah Kingsley Mamabolo; and the Special Envoy of IGAD, Lissane Yohannes, for their active support for the work of the Panel. Council **also expresses** deep appreciation for the generous support and assistance being extended to the AUHIP by the AU's bilateral and multilateral partners;
5. **Notes**, in relation to Sudan, that there have been several developments that have impacted on the situation in that country, including the completion of the first phase of the Sudanese National Dialogue, albeit without the participation of some opposition groups. Council **also notes** the lifting of economic sanctions by the United States, following progress by Sudan in its cooperation with the

United States on key areas of mutual interest, and the improvement in Sudan's relations with the international community;

6. **Welcomes** the unilateral declaration of a ceasefire and cessation of hostilities respectively by the Government of Sudan and the armed movements, namely the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N), in respect of the Two Areas, and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and the Sudan Liberation Movement- Minni Minawi (SLM-MM) in respect of Darfur;

7. **Further welcomes** the Joint Statement on Unilateral Ceasefire, Cessation of Hostilities and Completion of Negotiations, signed on 4 February 2018, jointly by the Government of Sudan and the SPLM-N, committing themselves to sustain their unilateral ceasefire and cessation of hostilities, which have brought significant benefits to the people of the Two Areas; continue their efforts to resolve the outstanding issues that prevented completion of the Cessation of Hostilities; and reconvene at the invitation of the Panel to complete the negotiations on a formal Cessation of Hostilities. Council **strongly urges** the Parties to indeed continue their search for the necessary compromises and flexibility that will enable them to reach agreement at the next round of negotiations, to permit formalization of an agreement and allow the delivery of humanitarian assistance to those in need;

8. **Recalls** that the Sudan National Dialogue called by President Omar Hassan Al'Bashir in January 2014, was concluded in Khartoum on 10 October 2016—albeit without the participation of key opposition entities—with the adoption a National Document of recommendations, and the establishment of a High Implementation Committee (HIC) to oversee the next phases of the Dialogue, most notably, the preparations for elections, and the making of a new Constitution for the Republic of Sudan;

9. **Reiterates** its conviction that the principles of the Roadmap Agreement, which require the Sudanese Parties to pursue inclusive processes for designing the next phases of the political processes in Sudan, especially to oversee the electoral processes in Sudan and the critical task of drafting a new constitution for Sudan, remain relevant for the democratic transformation of Sudan;

10. **Notes with concern** that the Sudanese economy is facing serious structural challenges which the Government has sought to address through remedial economic policies. Council **further notes** that the measures taken by the Government of Sudan have triggered public protests, particularly since January 2018, to which the authorities have responded by arresting some leaders and journalists, a number of whom continue to be detained.

11. **Welcomes** the improvement of the situation in the Abyei area thanks to the continued deployment of the UN Interim Force for Abyei (UNISFA). Council **commends** the Governments of Sudan and South Sudan for the implementation of previous decisions of the PSC concerning their cooperation on security issues. Council **recalls** the UN Security Council resolutions 2352 (2017) and 2386 (2017) of 15 May 2017 and 15 November 2017, respectively. In this regard, Council **also welcomes** the convening on 4 February 2018, in Addis Ababa, of the Extraordinary meeting of the Joint Political and Security Mechanism (JPSM), facilitated by the AUHIP, during which key decisions have been reached to address all concerned expressed by the UN Security Council;

12. **Acknowledges** the significant improvement in the relations between the Ngok Dinka and Misseriya communities in Abyei. Council **takes note** of the extraordinary meeting of the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee (AJOC) that took place from 14 to 15 November 2017, alongside a meeting of traditional leaders of Ngok Dinka and Misseriya communities. Council **underscores** that while the AJOC meeting discussed the Abyei Area interim institutions, created by the Agreement on Temporary Administrative and Security Arrangements for the Abyei Area of June 2011, the meeting was not able to reach agreement on the establishment of the interim institutions.

13. **Notes** that no progress have been made in resolving the final status of Abyei. In this context, Council **recalls** the communique PSC/MIN/COMM/1(CCCXXXIX) of its 339th meeting held at Ministerial level, on 24 October 2012, which accepted the AUHIP's Proposal on the Final Status of Abyei Area of 21 September 2012, and requested the Presidents of Sudan and South Sudan to continue their discussion on the Final Status of Abyei on the basis of the Panel's Proposal;

14. **Further recalls** the previous engagement of the AUHIP in the situation in South Sudan and **encourages** the Panel to extend its support to AU engagement in complementing IGAD efforts towards the resolution of the conflict in South Sudan, including the vital task of nation building;

15. **Congratulates** the AUHIP for convening a strategic consultation on the Horn of Africa which took place in Khartoum, from 8 to 10 October 2017, and brought together a diverse group of stakeholders, including senior policymakers from the states of the region and beyond, scholars, thought leaders and civil society representatives, to assist the Panel in developing a regional and holistic approach to the challenges of peace, security, stability and development in the Horn of Africa; in collaboration with IGAD. Council **emphasizes** that the Horn of Africa historically straddles the Red Sea and Indian Ocean, and represents a center of international interest with a range of actors including from outside the Region and the continent, and therefore its challenges will only be resolved through a comprehensive and inclusive approach and the active engagement of all relevant actors, including other African Member States, such as Egypt;

16. **Welcomes** the adoption by the AUHIP of an action plan, under which it will convene further meetings, with the participation of all relevant actors, to deliberate upon the final recommendations of the Khartoum Consultations, and also facilitate and expedite research and further consultation to inform the proposals for action, in line with the mandate conferred by the PSC;

17. Accordingly Council:

On the Cooperation Agreement

- (i) **urges** the Governments of Sudan and South Sudan to continue their collaboration with each other and the Panel to sustain the implementation of all aspects of the Cooperation Agreement of 2012, including the outstanding issues, in order to achieve the goal of two viable and prosperous states at peace with each other;

- (ii) **calls upon** the Governments of Sudan and South Sudan to implement the decisions they took during the Extraordinary JPSM meeting on 4 February 2018, relating to the implementation of the Safe Demilitarized Border Zones (SDBZ), and the commencement of the work on border demarcation, and requests the AUHIP to intensify its engagement with the Parties to encourage timely implementation of those decisions;

On Abyei

- (iii) **calls upon** the two Presidents of Sudan and South Sudan to renew their engagement, seeking to address the question of the Final Status of the Abyei Area, on the basis of the AUHIP's Proposal on the Final Status of Abyei Area of 21 September 2012;
- (iv) **urges** the two States to mandate their representatives in AJOC to discuss and take decisions on the establishment of the Abyei Area interim institutions, in accordance with the Agreement on Temporary Administrative and Security Arrangements for the Abyei Area of June 2011;
- (v) **encourages** the Traditional Leaders of Abyei to sustain their commitment to improve relations between the Ngok Dinka and Misseriya communities within the context of the meeting of November 2017, in Addis Ababa;

On Sudan's national political processes

- (vi) **urges** the Government of Sudan and the Sudanese opposition parties to renew their commitment to inclusive national political processes, as envisaged in the Roadmap Agreement, and in this regard, Council **requests** the Panel to continue its consultations with the Sudanese interlocutors to identify ways of enhancing the inclusivity in the next phase of Sudan's political processes which will shape the future of the country, including the national elections and the constitution-making process;
- (vii) **appeals** to the Sudanese parties, particularly the Government, to create and preserve the necessary conditions conducive for the participation of Sudanese political actors in the envisaged national political processes, Council **also appeals** to the national authorities to exercise restraint in their response to public dissatisfaction with regard to the economic situation;

On cessation of hostilities in Sudan

- (viii) **requests** the Government and the armed movements in Sudan to sustain and renew, the ceasefire and cessation of hostilities that they have unilaterally declared;
- (ix) **urges** the Government of Sudan and the SPLM-North to continue their preparations to resume the adjourned cessation of hostilities negotiations by 6 March 2018, where the PSC expects the parties to reach a formal cessation of hostilities agreement;

On South Sudan

- (x) **encourages** the Panel to renew its engagement, in close collaboration with other AU mechanisms, to complement the efforts of IGAD in support of the democratic transformation of South Sudan, especially through the implementation of the Agreement for the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan of August 2015 (ARCSS), and the vital task of nation building;

On the Horn of Africa

- (xi) **decides** to dedicate a PSC session to deliberate on the issues of the Horn of Africa, to be held at the earliest opportunity and **requests** the AU Commission to provide the necessary assistance in this regard; and,
- (xii) **requests** the AUHIP to urgently implement the recommendations of the Khartoum Consultation, and the Panel's plans to facilitate and conduct further research and consultation to inform proposals for action, particularly by the Region and the continent, bearing in mind the need for a comprehensive and inclusive approach of the complex dynamics in the Horn.

18. **Decides** to renew the mandate of the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel for Sudan and South Sudan, for a period of twelve (12) months, until 31 December 2018.

19. **Decides** to remain seized of the matter.

2018-02-06

Communiqué: Peace and Security Council 750th Meeting Addis Ababa, Ethiopia 06 February 2018

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