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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
586th MEETING
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA
31 MARCH 2016

PSC/PR/COMM/2.(DLXXXVI)

COMMUNIQUÉ

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The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 586th meeting held on 31 March 2016, adopted the following decision on its field mission to Guinea-Bissau, undertaken from 16 to 21 March 2016:

Council,

1. **Expresses** its gratitude to the Government and people of Guinea-Bissau for the warm welcome extended to it and the excellent arrangements made to ensure the smooth conduct of the field mission as well as to the Head of the AU Liaison Office and his staff for their assistance. Council **also expresses its appreciation for** the information provided and the fruitful discussions it had with all interlocutors, including the following government authorities: the President of the Republic, the Speaker of the National Popular Assembly (ANP) and the Prime Minister and its various Ministers, particularly of Foreign Affairs, International Relations and Communities, National Defence, Justice and the Secretaries of State for International Cooperation and Communities, and Public Order as well as with the Attorney General of the Republic. The PSC members also met with the Members of the diplomatic community accredited to Guinea-Bissau, as well as with all the political parties and the representatives of the civil society and religious leaders;

2. **Reaffirms** its previous pronouncements on the situation in Guinea-Bissau, including Press Statement PSC/PR/BR.(DLXXXI), adopted at its 581st, held on 09 March 2016, as well as the decision taken by the Assembly of the Union, at its 26th Ordinary Session, held in Addis Ababa, on 30 and 31 January 2016, reiterating its serious concern about the institutional and political crisis in Guinea-Bissau. Council **notes** that the divergences that emerged between the main authorities of the State institutions, the controversies in the ANP, in addition to those related to the interpretation of the provisions of the country's Constitution concerning the respective powers of the President of the Republic and the Prime Minister, further weaken the process of stabilizing Guinea-Bissau. In this regard, Council **notes** with concern the difficulties which this situation generates for the national functioning of the public administration and economic activities, which threatens to undermine the gains made by the country in the consolidation of peace, stability and post-conflict reconstruction;

3. **Reiterates** the AU's conviction that only a genuine and inclusive dialogue, based on the respect of the country's Constitution, will enable the Guinea-Bissau stakeholders to find a consensual solution to the crisis facing their country, and necessary conditions to consolidate peace and stability, and enable post-conflict reconstruction. In this regard, Council encourages all the Bissau-Guineans political actors to exercise utmost restraint, uphold the country's interest and engage in an inclusive dialogue to resolve their political differences and to do their utmost to preserve peace and stability, in order to foster socio-economic development, with a view to alleviating the suffering of the people of Guinea-Bissau;

4. **Welcomes** the efforts made by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), particularly through the action of its current Chairman, President Macky Sall of Senegal and the former President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria. Council, in addition, takes note with appreciation, of the initiatives taken by the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP) in favor of peace and stability in Guinea-Bissau. Council further, recognizes the critical importance of the role being played by ECOMIB in stabilizing the country and the operational and financial difficulties it faces. In this regard, Council **requests** the Commission to undertake joint efforts with ECOWAS to mobilize financial resources for the ECOMIB and strengthen of its capacity, including the increment of military personnel;

5. **Acknowledges that**, the Government and people of Guinea-Bissau are facing major challenges in rebuilding peace, security and stability as well as in reforming the Defense, Security and Justice Sectors, and potential danger that the non-addressed urgent needs of the security forces may cause to the country's fragile stability. In this respect, Council **requests** the Commission to undertake the necessary demarches to urgently support the mobilization of financial resources and others, as accompanying measures for Security and Justice sectors reform, in particular for the military pension fund; re-deployment and renewal of the current military leadership, funding and the start of the pension fund and retirement, social reintegration of former combatants, the rehabilitation of justice system and security sector reform, including the priority activities of training and retraining, and funding of quick impact projects;

6. **Reiterates** its request to the Commission to liaise with the Guinea-Bissau authorities, to identify practical steps through which the AU and its relevant structures could further contribute to peace and stability in Guinea-Bissau. To this end, Council:

- **Decides**, to support the efforts to find an early and consensual solution to the crisis facing Guinea-Bissau. In this regard, Council requests the Chairperson of the Commission to urgently propose a High-Level Facilitator Team to engage Guinea-Bissau stakeholders to urgently support the creation of conditions for and to facilitate the dialogue between main political stakeholders, including to promote an inclusive agreement of "Government Stability and Peaceful Coexistence",
- **Also decides** to support the ongoing process of the Constitution reform, with a view to clarifying, among other aspects, the powers of sovereign state organs, to reinforce the rule of law, separation of power, and maintain checks and balances in the national political dispensation; including the establishment of a Constitutional Court. In this regard, Council **requests** the Chairperson of the Commission to urgently dispatch a technical mission, involving legal experts, in order to assess how best the AU can further assist in the Constitutional review process,

- **Requests** the Commission to dispatch a comprehensive post-conflict reconstruction assessment mission, in order to identify the current needs for post-conflict reconstruction activities as well as to engage the Bissau-Guinean authorities to promote/organize national reconciliation/conference and dialogue among political actors and civil society in order to resolve the obstacles impacting stabilisation and development efforts of the country, and
7. **Calls** on the Government and people of Guinea-Bissau, as well as on international partners, to continue their efforts in rebuilding Guinea-Bissau, particularly in areas of socio-economic recovery, and reforming the justice, defence and security sectors, as well as in promoting the national reconciliation process;
8. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.

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