

AFRICAN UNION

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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL

392<sup>nd</sup> MEETING

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

26 AUGUST 2013

PSC/PR/BR.1 (CCCXCII)

**PRESS STATEMENT**

### **PRESS STATEMENT**

The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 392<sup>nd</sup> meeting held on 26 August 2013, was briefed by the Department of Political Affairs of the African Union Commission on its activities relating to elections in Africa. The briefing focused on past legislative elections in Togo and presidential elections in Mali and Zimbabwe, as well as the upcoming parliamentary elections in Rwanda, Swaziland, Cameroon and Guinea.

Council congratulated the people, political leaders and institutions in Togo, Mali and Zimbabwe on the peaceful organization of elections in these countries, demonstrating the engagement of Member States in respecting the principles enshrined in the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. Council called on all political stakeholders in these countries to respect the outcome of the popular vote and continue to maintain a climate of peace and thus contribute to conflict prevention and management on the continent. In the case of Zimbabwe, Council further called for the immediate and unconditional lifting of all sanctions imposed on the country and stressed that the lifting of the sanctions will contribute to socio-economic recovery for the benefit of the long suffering population of the country.

Council noted the ongoing preparations for elections in Rwanda, Swaziland, Cameroon and Guinea to be held on 16 September, 20 September, 24 September and 30 September 2013, respectively. Council urges stakeholders in these countries to ensure that a level playing exists for all political contenders and to ensure that the elections will be free and credible in order that the incidence of election-related violence is averted on the continent.

Council welcomed the ongoing political progress in the Republic of Madagascar, particularly the steps taken by the Special Elections Court on 17 August 2013 to exclude the names of the three presidential candidates in line with the request of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the International Contact Group on Madagascar (ICG-M) for names of those candidates to be withdrawn from the list of candidates for the pending presidential elections. Council commends the Court's decision which allowed the fixation of the date of the first round of the presidential elections on 25 October 2013. In this regard, Council called on the AU Commission, as well the international community as whole, to provide the necessary support to the Electoral Commission of Madagascar, for the good organisation and conduct of the presidential election. Council also called on the AU Commission to plan, as it did for Togo, Mali and Zimbabwe, to deploy a long term election observer mission to Madagascar to enhance the credibility of the upcoming elections.

Council called on the Commission to remain engaged and deploy election observer missions in upcoming elections on the continent.

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