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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
401st MEETING
21 OCTOBER 2013
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/BR.(CDI)

PRESS STATEMENT

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The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 401st meeting held on 21 October 2013, exchanged views on the situation in the Abyei Area.

Council expressed deep concern at the prevailing situation in the Abyei Area. Council welcomed the planned meeting between President Omar Hassan Al Bashir of the Republic of Sudan and President Salva Kiir Mayardit of the Republic of South Sudan, in Juba, on 22 October 2013, as part of the ongoing efforts to consolidate the progress made in the normalization of relations between the two countries and to address outstanding issues in their relations. Council strongly appealed to the two Heads of State to seize the opportunity of their Summit meeting to take concrete steps to address the challenges at hand in Abyei, as outlined in communiqué PSC/AHG/COMM/2.(CCCXC VII) adopted at its 397th meeting held at the level of the Heads of State and Government, in New York, on 23 September 2013.

Council reiterated its earlier communiqués and press statements on the issue of Abyei, including its acceptance of the Proposal submitted by the AU High-Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP), on 21 September 2012, as representing a fair, equitable and workable solution to the dispute between the two countries, which takes into account existing Agreements entered into by the Parties, as well as the needs and interests of the communities on the ground. Council called on the two countries to resume their discussions on the final status of Abyei on the basis of the AUHIP Proposal, bearing in mind the need to ensure that Abyei serves as a bridge between Sudan and South Sudan, as envisaged in the Abyei Protocol of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA).

Council further reiterated the need for the expeditious implementation of the Agreement on the Temporary Administrative and Security Arrangements for the Abyei Area of 20 June 2011; the facilitation of the rapid and safe return of refugees and displaced persons and the peaceful migration of nomadic pastoralists during the coming dry season; the full demilitarization of the Abyei Area, including the withdrawal of the police force stationed in Diffra and its replacement by the Abyei Area Police Service; as well as the mobilization of assistance for Abyei and the implementation of the commitment to provide 2% of oil revenue originating from Abyei for the development of the Area. Council also stressed the urgency of establishing the Abyei Area Referendum Commission, including the review and adoption of a revised referendum law in line with the AUHIP Proposal and the submission by the two countries of the list of their nominees to the AUHIP. Council, once again, made an urgent appeal to the Parties to refrain from any unilateral action and statement that may impede progress towards the search for a lasting solution.

Council agreed to review the situation in Abyei in light of the outcome of the Summit meeting between the two Heads of State, and to finalize the arrangements for its impending visit to Abyei, as decided in communiqué PSC/MIN/COMM.1 (CCCLXXXVII) Rev.1, adopted at its 387th meeting held on 29 July 2013.

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