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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
508TH MEETING
18 MAY 2015
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/COMM.(DVIII)

COMMUNIQUÉ

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The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 508th meeting, held on 18 May 2015, adopted the following decision on the implementation of the mandate of the Regional Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the Lord's Resistance Army (RCI-LRA):

Council,

1. **Takes note** of the report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the implementation of the mandate of the RCI-LRA [PSC/PR/2(DVII)], the introductory remarks by the Commissioner for Peace and Security and the briefing given by the AU Special Envoy for the LRA Issue, as well as of the statements made by the representatives of France, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, as members of the United Nations (UN) Security Council, the UN Secretariat and the European Union (EU);
2. **Recalls** communiqué PSC/PR/COMM/1.(CDXXXVI) adopted at its 436th meeting held on 23 May 2014, through which Council, among others, extended the mandate of the RCI-LRA for an additional period of twelve (12) months;
3. **Welcomes** the progress being made in the implementation of the mandate of the RCI-LRA. Council **commends** the troops of the Regional Task Force (RTF), the operational arm of the RCI-LRA, for the progress made towards the elimination of the LRA, as evidenced by the neutralization of a number of LRA combatants, the defection of several LRA commanders, including Dominic Ongwen, and the rescue of many abductees, mainly women and children;
4. **Expresses appreciation** for the close partnership between the AU and the UN, through the AU Special Envoy for the LRA Issue, Lieutenant-General (Rtd.) Jackson Kiprono Tuwei, and the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Central Africa, Professor Abdoulaye Bathily, which is sustaining the momentum against the LRA. Council **pays tribute** to the former AU Special Envoy for the LRA Issue, Ambassador Francisco Madeira, and **commends** the new Special Envoy for his commitment and sustained efforts;
5. **Notes with satisfaction** the continued support of the international partners to the RCI-LRA. In this respect, Council **expresses its appreciation** to the EU for its financial support to the Initiative, as well as to the US for its capacity-building, logistical and operational support to the RTF contingents. Council **also expresses gratitude** to the UN, particularly its peacekeeping operations on the ground, for the assistance extended to the RTF, within their means and respective mandates;
6. **Expresses concern** that, despite the progress being made, the LRA continues to operate in a number of areas in the Central African Republic (CAR) and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), abducting, raping, killing civilians and causing the displacement of people in difficult humanitarian conditions;

7. Council **further condemns, in the strongest terms**, the LRA's continued perpetration of sexual violence against women and girls, and forced use of them as household labourers to sustain commanders of the group;
8. **Further notes with concern** that the volatile situation in the CAR and the conflict in South Sudan have impacted negatively on the operations of the RTF, providing opportunities for the LRA to reorganize itself in order to resume large-scale attacks against civilians;
9. **Calls** for renewed efforts to enhance the effectiveness of the fight against the LRA. In this respect, Council:
- (i) **urges** the member countries of the RCI-LRA to continue to demonstrate the required commitment to the Initiative, including by enhancing logistical support to their respective contingents,
 - (ii) **stresses** the need for closer operational coordination between the RTF and UN peacekeeping operations in the mission area, namely the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the CAR (MINUSCA), the UN Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) and the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), and **requests** the Commission to take all necessary follow-up steps in this respect,
 - (iii) **calls for** the holding of regular meetings of the Joint Coordination Mechanism (JCM), composed of the Ministers of Defense of the member countries of the RCI-LRA, to provide the necessary strategic guidance on the implementation of the mandate of the Initiative,
 - (iv) **reiterates** the need for enhanced cooperation with all the countries of the region, with a view to expediting the total elimination of the LRA, and **calls on** the Commission to actively engage all concerned countries, including through regular visits by the Special Envoy,
 - (v) **urges** the UN Security Council to take the necessary steps, including adjusting the mandates of the relevant UN peacekeeping operations, to facilitate the provision by these operations, within capabilities, of effective support to the RCI-LRA, in particular the RTF headquarters and contingents, and
 - (vi) **calls** on the AU Member States and international partners to extend enhanced financial and logistical support to the RCI-LRA. In this regard, Council **requests** the Commission to convene, as soon as possible, the second RCI-LRA Support Forum, in accordance with the request made by the 1st ministerial meeting of the JCM, on 8 May 2012, to mobilize the necessary support for the success of the RCI-LRA;
10. **Urges** the Commission to take immediate practical steps to finalize the assessment of the rehabilitation needs of the areas affected by activities of the LRA, in line with the appeal made by Council in communiqué PSC/PR/COMM (CCXCIX) adopted at its 299th

meeting held on 22 November 2011. In this respect, Council **requests** the Commission, in coordination with the international community, particularly the World Bank and the African Development Bank, to hold, within three months, a workshop to develop a vision, strategy and plan of action for the stabilization, recovery and rehabilitation of the affected areas;

11. **Decides** to extend for an additional period of 12 months the mandate of the RCI-LRA, as spelt out in communiqué PSC/PR/COMM (CCXCIX);
12. **Requests** the Commission to provide quarterly updates on the implementation of the mandate of the RCI-LRA;
13. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.

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