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## PRESS RELEASE

### THE AFRICAN UNION WELCOMES THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE NIAMEY MEETING OF THE AFRICAN TROOP CONTRIBUTING COUNTRIES TO MINUSMA

#### *The AU calls for renewed efforts to stabilize northern Mali and promote lasting peace and security in the country*

**Addis Ababa, 7 November 2014:** The Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union (AU), Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, welcomes the conclusions of the meeting of the African troop contributing countries to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), as well as other countries of the region and international stakeholders, held in Niamey, Niger, on 5 November 2014. She commends President Mahamadou Issoufou and the Government of Niger for having taken the initiative to convene this important meeting, in which the AU participated and that took place in a context marked by the resurgence of terrorist attacks in northern Mali.

The Chairperson of the Commission reiterates the call made by the Niamey ministerial meeting regarding the need for the early enhancement of MINUSMA, in terms of means and resources, with a view to enabling it to fulfill its mandate more effectively. She also expresses the AU's support to the other measures proposed to enhance the effectiveness of MINUSMA. She urges the United Nations Security Council to give its full support to the conclusions of the Niamey meeting and, in this regard, looks forward to the follow-up steps that the Security Council will take. She renews the AU's appreciation to the troop contributing countries for their commitment, and urgently appeals to all the AU Member States in a position to do so to contribute uniformed personnel to MINUSMA, to enable the Mission to quickly reach its authorized strength.

The Chairperson of the Commission echoes the conclusions of the ministerial meeting on the importance of the rapid conclusion of the inter-Malian talks that are due to resume in Algiers, on 15 November 2014, noting that the conclusion of an Agreement between the Government of Mali and the armed movements in the North would make it possible to more effectively combat the terrorist and criminal groups operating in that part of the country. She, once again, welcomes the significant advances recorded within the framework of the Algiers Process, and reiterates AU's full support to the mediation efforts led by Algeria, with the participation of the countries of the region and the concerned international organizations, including the AU.

The Chairperson of the Commission stresses that, as a follow up to the request made by the Niamey ministerial meeting, the Commission will speed up the reflection on the establishment of a rapid intervention force for northern Mali, within the framework of the Nouakchott Process on the Enhancement of Security Cooperation and the Operationalization of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) in the Sahelo-Saharan region, with the view of submitting detailed recommendations to the AU Peace and Security Council. In the meantime, the Commission will pursue the efforts already initiated, in the context of the Nouakchott Process, in order to promote more timely and effective exchange of intelligence and information among the countries of the sahel-Saharan region, as well as the enhancement of national capacities to combat terrorism and transnational organized crime.

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