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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
874TH MEETING

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA
5 SEPTEMBER 2019

PSC/PR/BR.(DCCCLXXIV)

PRESS STATEMENT

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The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), in commemorating the Africa Amnesty Month, dedicated its 874th meeting held on 5 September 2019, to an open session which focused its discussion on the progress made in the implementation of the AU Master Roadmap of Practical Steps for Silencing the Guns in Africa by the Year 2020. Particular attention was paid on the challenges and perspectives, facing security sector reform (SSR) in Africa.

Council took note of the opening statement made by the Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Morocco to the AU, H.E. Ambassador Mohamed Arrouchi, in his capacity as the PSC Chairperson for the month of September 2019. Council also took note of the statement of the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, H.E. Ambassador Smail Chergui, read on his behalf by the Acting Director for Peace and Security Department, Ambassador Frederick Gateretse Ngoga. Council further took note of the presentations made by H.E. Mrs. Hanna Tetteh, in her capacity as the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General (SRSG) and Head of the UN Office to the AU (UNOAU), and by the representatives of Institute for Security Studies (ISS) and the Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS), as well as of statements made by the representatives of AU Member States, AU partners and international organizations.

Council recalled Assembly Decision [Assembly/AU/Dec. 645(XXIX)] on the Inaugural Report of the PSC on the Implementation of the AU Master Roadmap of Practical Steps for Silencing the Guns in Africa by the Year 2020, in which the Assembly declared the month of September, each year, up to 2020, as “Africa Amnesty Month” for the surrender and collection of illegally owned weapons/arms, in line with African and international best practices. Council also recalled Assembly Decision [Assembly/AU/Dec.630 (XXVIII)] by which the Assembly endorsed the AU Master Roadmap of Practical Steps to Silence the Guns in Africa by the Year 2020, as well as Press Statement [PSC/PR/BR.(DCCXVI)] adopted by Council at its 716th meeting held on 4 September 2017.

Council underlined that effective implementation of Africa Amnesty Month is crucial for the achievement of a conflict free Africa, and in this regard, emphasized the importance of involvement of the Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (RECs/RMs) in the implementation of the AU Master Roadmap and the AU theme for the year 2020 “Silence the Guns in Africa”.

Council stressed, once again, that good governance of the security sector is a sine qua non for sustainable economic and political development.

Council acknowledged that security sector reform is a delicate, sensitive and politically complex process that should be carried out carefully. In this regard Council called on the relevant AU organs and institutions to be fully engaged and to ensure more enhanced cooperation and working synergies with regional bodies and international partners.

Council reiterated the need for popularizing the Africa Amnesty Month and, in this context, stressed the important role that civil society organizations can play in spreading public awareness at the grass root level in the implementation of the AU Master Roadmap particularly aspects relating to security sector governance.

Council commended the AU Commission for establishing the SSR Steering Committee, which will closely work with Member States in implementing SSR in the Continent.

Council encouraged Member States to make full use of existing conflict prevention tools, in particular, the Continental Structural Conflict Prevention Framework developed by the AU Commission.

Council requested the AU Commission to continue providing technical support to Member States based on their specific SSR needs.

Council encouraged all Member States to commit themselves and implement the AU Master Roadmap plans through establishing inclusive mechanisms in their national plans.

Council emphasized the importance of ensuring national ownership of SSR programmes, as well as of ensuring that the reforms are based on the priorities defined by Member States.

Council also encouraged Member States to share their experiences, lessons learnt and best practices in the implementation of SSR.

Council reiterated its call for Member States to further enhance and reinforce their coordination at national and continental levels in order to control and monitor the use and movement of arms in the Continent.

Council agreed to remain actively seized of the matter.

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