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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
581ST MEETING

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA
9 MARCH 2016

PSC/PR/COMM.(DLXXXI)

COMMUNIQUÉ

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The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 581st meeting, held on 9 March 2016, adopted the following decision on the situation in Burundi:

Council,

1. **Takes note** of the briefing made by the Commissioner for Peace and Security on the visit of the AU High Level Delegation to Burundi and on the evolution of the situation in that country. Council **also takes note** of the statements made by the representatives of Burundi, as well as by Tanzania in its capacity the current Chair of the East African Community (EAC);
2. **Recalls** its previous communiqués and press statements on the situation in Burundi, as well as press releases made by the Chairperson of the Commission. Council **further recalls** the decision taken by the 26th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union, held on 30 and 31 January 2016 and **reaffirms** the responsibilities of the AU, in its capacity as Guarantor of the 2000 Arusha Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Burundi. Council **stresses** its determination to fully play its role and take all necessary measures for the promotion of peace, security and stability in Burundi, in conformity with its mandate, as stipulated in the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the AU;
3. **Welcomes** the visit to Burundi, on 25 and 26 February 2016, by the AU High-level Delegation, established pursuant to the relevant provisions of the above-mentioned decision of the Assembly of the Union. Council **pays tribute** to the Presidents of South Africa, Gabon, Mauritania and Senegal, as well as to the Prime Minister of Ethiopia for their contribution to the efforts of the AU for peace, security and stability in Burundi. Council **emphasises** that their work is an exemplary contribution to African ownership and resolution of the problems of the continent;
4. **Endorses** the conclusions of the visit of the AU High Level Delegation to Burundi, as contained in the Communiqué issued at the end of the mission. Council **welcomes, in particular**, the consent of the Burundian authorities to increase to two hundred (200) the number of Human Rights Observers (100) and Military Experts (100) and **requests** the Commission to expedite the process of their deployment in Burundi. Council **also notes with satisfaction** the readiness of the members of the AU High Level Delegation to pursue their efforts, in support of the mediation efforts led by President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, on behalf of the EAC, particularly with regard to the need to ensure that all stakeholders in Burundi participate in the Inclusive Dialogue and actively preserve the gains of the Arusha Agreement;
5. **Commends** the Burundian authorities for the measures taken to restore respect for human rights, preservation of civic liberties and freedom of the press. In this respect, Council **urges** the authorities to enhance and consolidate these efforts;
6. **Urges** the EAC, in particular, and countries of the region to accelerate the mediation efforts to find a lasting solution to the crisis in Burundi. In this regard, Council **reiterates** the full support of the AU to the EAC efforts for the Inter-Burundian Inclusive Dialogue process, led by President Yoweri Museveni, the EAC-appointed Mediator and **notes with satisfaction** the appointment of former President Benjamin Mkapa of Tanzania as Facilitator and member of the mediation team. Council **reiterates its full support** to the Mediator and the Facilitator in the Burundi crisis and **requests** them to expedite consultations with all the Burundian stakeholders in order to fix, as early as possible, a date for the resumption of the Inter-Burundian Inclusive Dialogue;

7. **Reiterates its urgent appeal** to all the Burundian stakeholders to exercise maximum restraint and to lend all necessary cooperation to the efforts of the Mediator and the Facilitator;
8. **Welcomes** the recent visit, by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to Burundi, which falls within the framework of international efforts to further strengthen those led by Africa with a view to finding a lasting solution to the crisis in the country;
9. **Reiterates its appreciation** to the neighbouring countries which are hosting Burundian refugees, as well as its call to the international community to continue and intensify its humanitarian assistance to the affected population and the host countries;
10. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.

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