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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL

682ND MEETING

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

25 APRIL 2017

PSC/PR/COMM.(DCLXXXII)

COMMUNIQUE

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The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), at its 682nd meeting, held at ministerial level, on 25 April 2017, adopted the following decision on Maritime Security and Safety and Peace, Security and Development of the Blue Economy, “After Lomé”:

Council:

1. **Takes note** of the statements delivered by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and African Integration of the Republic of Togo, H.E. Prof. Robert Dussey, in his capacity as the Chairperson of the PSC for the month of April 2017, and the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, H.E. Ambassador Smail Chergui. Council **also takes note** of the presentation made by the AU Commissioner for Trade and Industry, H.E. Ambassador Albert Muchanga, as well as by Ambassador Amoko Kouvahe and Justice Kokou Humado, both from Togo. Council **further takes note** of the statements made by representatives of Member States, the Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (RECs/RMs), as well as by the representative of the United Nations (UN) and European Union (EU) ;
2. **Recalls** the 2050 Africa’s Integrated Maritime (2050 AIM) Strategy and its Plan of Action adopted by the 22nd Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly in January 2014. Council **also recalls** Assembly Decision Ext/Assembly/AU/Dec.1 (VI) by the AU Extraordinary Summit, held on 15 October 2016, in Lomé, Togo, which adopted the Charter on Maritime Safety and Security and Development in Africa;
3. **Expresses deep concern** over the persistence of threats to safety and security in the maritime domain, including piracy, armed robbery at sea, illegal, unreported and unregulated/illegal fishing, dumping of toxic waste, illegal arms, drug and human trafficking, money laundering, smuggling of migrants and terrorism. In this regard, Council **underscores the importance** of the adoption of stringent measures to combat these threats;
4. **Emphasizes** the link between peace, security and development with regard to the maritime domain as integral elements for Africa’s overall economic growth and integration process. In this respect, Council **underlines the importance** of the Lomé Charter as an African instrument for promoting peace, security and safety in Africa’s maritime domain, which are the necessary conditions for the development and growth of the blue economy for the benefit of the continent and its people;
5. **Welcomes** the appointment of President Faure Essozimna Gnassingbe of the Republic of Togo as AU Champion for issues related to maritime security and safety and **commends** his tireless efforts towards the promotion of maritime security and safety in Africa, as a contribution to enhance peace and security in the continent;

6. **Recalls** the request made by the Extraordinary Summit to the Commission to take all necessary measures in order to convene extraordinary sessions of the relevant Specialized Technical Committees (STCs) which were not involved in the elaboration process of the Charter namely: the STC on Trade, Industry and Minerals, the STC on Transport, Infrastructure, Energy and Tourism, the STC on Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning and Integration and any other relevant STCs to enable them to consider issues falling within their respective mandates and submit their contributions to the African Charter, in the form of annexes, to the Assembly for consideration in July 2017. In this regard, Council **recognizes** the progress made in the implementation of this decision and **requests** the Commission to expedite the finalization of the draft annexes to the Lomé Charter, with a view to enabling the earliest convening of the meeting of the relevant STCs for their elaboration;
7. **Takes note with gratitude** of the offer made by the Republic of Togo to host the meetings of relevant STCs;
8. **Underscores** the important role of RECs/RMs in the elaboration, implementation and harmonization of national and regional maritime instruments including regulatory frameworks;
9. **Further underscores the need** to put in place an appropriate follow up mechanism, in particular within the AU Commission, bearing in mind the cross-sectoral and multidimensional nature of issues relating to Maritime Security and Safety and Development as recognized in the 2050 AIM Strategy and the Lomé Charter ;
10. **Further commends** Togo for being the only AU Member State that has already signed and ratified the Lomé Charter, and **urges** all Member States to ratify the Charter, in accordance with their relevant national procedures;
11. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.

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