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**PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
704TH MEETING
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA
21 JULY 2017**

PSC/PR/BR.(DCCIV)

PRESS STATEMENT

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The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), at its 704th meeting held on 21 July 2017, has been updated by the Commission on Free Movement of People in Africa and Mitigating Security Impediments.

Council took note of the briefings provided by the Department of Political Affairs of the AU Commission and Rwanda, in its capacity as Chair of the Committee of Intelligence and Security Services of Africa (CISSA) on Free Movement of People in Africa and Mitigating Security Impediments. Council also took note of the statement made by the representative of the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

Council recalled decision Assembly/AU/Dec.607 (XXVII) on the Free Movement of Persons and the African Passport adopted by the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government at its 27th ordinary session held in Kigali, Rwanda, in July 2016, in which the Assembly urged all Member States to adopt the African Passport and work closely with the AU Commission to facilitate the processes towards its issuance at the national level based on international, continental and national policy provisions and continental design and specifications. Council further recalled communiqué PSC/PR/COMM.1 (DCLXI) of its 661st meeting, held on 23 February 2017.

Council acknowledged that free movement of persons is one of the crucial parts in efforts aimed at deepening continental integration and unity, in the spirit of Pan-Africanism, African Renaissance, as outlined in Agenda 2063.

Council commended the Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs) and Member States that signed and ratified all relevant AU instruments on free movement of people, and have already adopted mechanisms to facilitate free movement of people in their respective regions and countries, and encouraged others to emulate the example. In this respect, Council urged Member States to address all institutional and regulatory capacity gaps, in order to have a common policy on free movement of people in Africa.

Council underscored the importance of enhanced collaboration between and among Member States, particularly their immigration, defence, security and intelligence services, to mitigate security impediments to free movement in Africa. Council also stressed the need to work closely with the relevant African and international institutions, in order to ensure timely sharing of intelligence and build mutual confidence and trust, with a view to address security concerns pertaining to the free movement of people in Africa.

Council further commended the AU Commission on the progress made in the on-going efforts to develop the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Right of

Establishment in Africa, pursuant to Assembly decision [Assembly/AU/Dec.607 (XXVII)], and urged all Member States to fully participate in this process. In this respect, Council welcomed the consultations between the RECs/RMs and Member States on the draft Implementation Plan of the Draft Protocol and looked forward to the meeting of Experts from Member States to consider the draft Protocol and its draft Implementation Plan, to be held from 30 August to 2 September 2017, in Port Louis, Mauritius.

Council emphasized the importance of expediting the process of adopting an African Passport. In the same context, Council requested the AU Commission to provide necessary technical support to Member States, in order to enable them to produce and issue the African passport to their own citizens.

Council requested the Commission to be regularly updated on steps taken by the AU with regards to Free Movement of persons in Africa.

Council decided to remain seized of the issue pertaining to Free Movement of People in Africa and Mitigating Security Impediments.

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Press Statement, Peace and Security Council 704th Meeting Addis Ababa, Ethiopia 21 July 2017

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