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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL

887<sup>TH</sup> MEETING

17 OCTOBER 2019

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/BR.(DCCCLXXXVII)

PRESS STATEMENT

## **PRESS STATEMENT**

The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), dedicated its 887<sup>th</sup> meeting, held on 17 October 2019, to an open session on the theme: “The Role of Women in Social Changes and Peace Building: Time for Recognition”, in line with the commemoration of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security.

Council took note of the Opening Statement made by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Liberia to the AU, H.E. Robert Y. Lormia II, in his capacity as the Chairperson of the PSC for the month of October 2019, as well as of the message from the Commissioner for Peace and Security read on his behalf by Mr. Amadou Diongue, ag. Secretary to the PSC. Council also took note of statements made by the AU Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Women, Peace and Security, Mme Bineta Diop and the UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women, Madam Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka.

Council welcomed the presentation by Special Envoy Diop on the first Report on the Implementation of the Women Peace and Security Agenda in Africa, made using the Continental Results Framework that was adopted by PSC in May 2018. Council welcomed also presentations by representatives of women of Sudan, namely Ms. Nawal Hassan Osman Haroun from Sudan Woman Forum and Ms. Nawal Abo Alhassan from Sudanese Organization and Research Development, who shared their experience on the role played by women of Sudan in the democratic transformation that is occurring in the country. Council took note as well of all statements made by the representatives of Member States, AU Partners, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), as well as international institutions and organizations.

Council recalled all its previous decisions and pronouncements, on women, peace and security in Africa, particularly Press Statements [PSC/PR/BR.(DCCCIII)] adopted at its 803<sup>rd</sup> meeting held on 19 October 2018., as well as the UN Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000), which is a landmark decision aimed at ensuring that women and girls are systematically and sustainably integrated into peace and security.

Council commended the Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the AU Commission on Women, Peace and Security for the Report on the Implementation of the Women Peace and Security Agenda in Africa. Council emphasized that the Report create a base for Member States in streamlining the role of women in peace and security issues, in their national programmes. In this regard, Council requested the AU Special Envoy to consult and collect all the inputs from Member States to enrich the report before its publication.

Council acknowledged that women’s participation in peace process make tangible difference in efforts aimed at preventing, managing and resolving conflicts for durability of peace and stability, as well as providing opportunities to embed gender equality goals in peacebuilding and state building processes. In this regard, Council took note of the call for support from women of Sudan and their recommendations, including the removal of the Republic of Sudan from the list of countries that sponsor terrorism, the demand for a 50% representation in peace processes and the appointment of gender advisors to support the mediation and negotiation processes for lasting peace in Sudan.

Council particularly welcomed the recent actions taken by the Prime Minister of Sudan, H.E. Dr. Abdalla Hamdok, to include the participation of women in peace negotiation in Sudan. Council further commended the exemplary role played by the women of Sudan in peace processes in their country which will positively contribute to the building of peaceful society and stabilization of Sudan.

Council underscored on the need to continue empowering and encouraging women participation in political, social and economic processes in all levels, national, regional and continental. In this regard, Council encouraged the AU Commission, FemWise and the African Women Leaders Network (AWLN) to continue supporting and capacitating African women for an enhanced role and leadership in in conflict prevention and peace building. Council emphasized that Women, Peace and Security Agenda is crucial in realizing the goals set in AU Agenda 2063 and UN Agenda 2030, as well as the AU flagship project to silence the guns in Africa by the year 2020.

Council noted with deep concern the persistence of sexual and gender-based violence in conflict situations. Council urged all parties to conflict to take all measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse in conflict situations in Africa. Council, while reaffirmed its strong commitment to fight Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV), emphasized that countries concerned have an obligation to investigate and prosecute the perpetrators of such crimes.

The Council warned against the exploitation and sexual abuse perpetrated by armed and terrorist groups as a tactic and weapon of war and called for greater synergy and cooperation on the efforts by the AU Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security and the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, and encouraged them to regularly brief Council on their activities.

Council also recalled the Policy on Conduct and Discipline for Peace Support Operations (PSOs) and the Policy for Prevention and Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse for PSOs, adopted by the Council at its 813<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 29 November 2019.

Council stressed that the year 2020 will provide an opportunity for all Member States and partners to take stock of commitments made in the implementation of resolution 1325, with a view to mark achievements made and identify challenges to be addressed.

Council commended all Member States that have already adopted their National Action Plans for the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda and reiterated its call to Member States to submit an annual report using the AU Continental Results Framework on monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the Women, peace and Security Agenda. In the same vein, Council encouraged all other Member States, which have not yet done so, to also do the same without further delays.

Council commended the international community for their support to women and girls in conflict situation and appealed to them to continue to provide support in a coordinated manner in order to achieve the goal set, strengthening the role of women in peace and security and create conducive environment for sustainable development.

Council reiterated its call to AUC to institutionalize the Office of the Special Envoy on women, Peace and Security, in the context of undergoing AU reforms.

Council underscored the need for all Member States to sign, ratify, fully domesticate and implement all AU and international instruments relating to women, peace and security.

Council agreed to remain actively seize of the mater.