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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
647TH MEETING
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA
13 JANUARY 2017

PSC/PR/COMM. (DCXLVII)

COMMUNIQUÉ

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The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 647th meeting held on 13 January 2017, adopted the following decision on the post-election situation in The Islamic Republic of The Gambia:

Council:

1. **Takes note** of the briefing made by the Chairperson of the Commission, Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, as well as the presentation made by the Commissioner for Political Affairs, Dr. Aisha Laraba Abdullahi, on the latest developments in the post-electoral situation in The Gambia, following the presidential election held in that country on 1 December 2016. Council **also takes note** of the statements made by the representatives of The Gambia, as well as of Liberia, in its capacity as Chair of the Authority of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Egypt, Ethiopia and Senegal, as African Members of the UN Security Council, and the United Nations (UN);
2. **Recalls** Article 23 (4) of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. Council **further recalls** communiqué PSC/PR/COMM. (DCXLIV) adopted at its 644th meeting held on 12 December 2016, in which Council strongly rejected any attempt to circumvent or reverse the outcome of the presidential election held in The Gambia on 1 December 2016, which is a clear expression of the popular will and choice of the Gambian people, and called upon outgoing President Yahya Jammeh to keep to the letter and spirit of the speech he delivered on 2 December 2016, in which he welcomed the maturity of democracy in The Gambia and congratulated the president-elect, Adama Barrow;
3. **Commends** ECOWAS for its principled stand with regard to the situation in The Gambia, and **reaffirms its full support** to the decisions adopted by the 50th Ordinary Summit of the ECOWAS Authority held in Abuja, on 17 December 2016, including the consideration to use all necessary means to ensure the respect of the will of the people of The Gambia. In this respect, Council **pays tribute** to the leadership and commitment demonstrated by Her Excellency President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, of Liberia, Chairperson of the ECOWAS Authority, as well as to His Excellency President Muhammadu Buhari of Nigeria, ECOWAS Mediator, and to Former President John Dramani Mahama, of Ghana, co-Mediator, for their continued efforts aimed at ensuring a peaceful and smooth transfer of power in The Gambia;
4. **Calls upon, once again**, the outgoing President, Yahya Jammeh, to respect the Constitution of the Gambia, the ECOWAS and AU instruments, in particular the AU Constitutive Act and the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, by handing over power, on 19 January 2017, as stated in the Constitution, to the newly-elected President of The Gambia, Adama Barrow, as decided by the people of the country;

5. **Decides**, in line with Articles 24 and 25 of the AU Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, as well as Article 7 (m) of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council, to take the following steps with a view to ensuring respect for the will of the Gambian people:

- i) **Solemnly declares** the inviolable nature of the outcome of the presidential elections held on 1 December 2016 in The Gambia. In this respect, Council **strongly reaffirms** the AU's zero tolerance policy with regard to coup d'état and unconstitutional changes of government in Africa;
- ii) **Further Declares** that, as of 19 January 2017, outgoing President Yahya Jammeh will cease to be recognized by the AU as legitimate President of the Republic of The Gambia;
- iii) **Warns** outgoing President Yahya Jammeh of serious consequences in the event that his action causes any crisis that could lead to political disorder, humanitarian and human rights disaster, including loss of innocent lives and destruction of properties;

6. **Stresses the need** for the outgoing President Yahya Jammeh and his Government to refrain from any action that could undermine the process leading up to the swearing in of the president-elect, on 19 January 2017. **Reiterates its call** to the Gambian stakeholders, including the defense and security forces, to exercise utmost restraint and to strictly abide by the Constitution and uphold the rule of law, including the respect for the freedom of speech. Council **stresses** the duty and obligation of the defense and security forces to place themselves at the disposal of the democratically elected authorities of their country;

7. **Further stresses the importance** of a common and unequivocal message and continued coordination of efforts within the international community, in support to ECOWAS endeavours in The Gambia;

8. **Expresses its appreciation** to the Chairperson of the Union, as well as to the Chairperson of the Commission, for their initiatives and efforts aimed at supporting those of ECOWAS and countries of the region to urgently find a way for a speedy and peaceful transfer of power in The Gambia;

9. **Looks forward with keen interest** to the outcome of the visit to The Gambia, today, 13 January 2017, by the ECOWAS Mediation, with the participation of the AU and the UN;

10. **Agrees** to meet, as soon as possible, to assess the post-electoral situation in The Gambia and take appropriate decisions as may be deemed necessary;

11. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.