COMMUNIQUÉ OF THE MEETING OF THE AU HIGH-LEVEL AD HOC COMMITTEE FOR SOUTH SUDAN, AT MINISTERIAL LEVEL, NIAMEY, NIGER
6 JULY 2019

The African Union High-Level Ad Hoc Committee for South Sudan (C5) comprising its Members namely, South Africa, as Chair, Algeria, Chad, Nigeria and Rwanda, convened its meeting in Niamey, Niger, on 6 July 2019, at the ministerial level, on the margins of the inaugural African Union-Regional Economic Communities Coordination Summit. The meeting was in follow up to the meeting of the C5 at the level of Heads of State and Government, held in Nouakchott, Mauritania on the sidelines of the 32nd ordinary session of the Assembly of the AU, which directed that the Chair of the C5 and the Chairperson of the AU Commission identify specific tasks to be implemented by the C5 in support of the peace process in South Sudan.

The Committee received a presentation by the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, Ambassador Smail Chergui. Subsequently, the Committee received a Report of the C5 Ambassadors on the Implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS), presented by Ambassador Ndumiso Ntshinga, Permanent Representative of South Africa to the AU, in his capacity as the Chairperson of the C5 Ambassadors. The Committee also received a statement by the Special Envoy of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Ambassador Ismail Waisse.

During its deliberations, the Committee commended the South Sudanese parties for their commitment to implementing the Revitalized Agreement signed on 12 September 2018. In this regard, the Committee noted that the South Sudanese parties’ decision of May 2019, to extend the pre-interim period by six months, was indispensable towards creating a conducive environment for establishing the Interim Government in November 2019. In order to ensure that the interim government is established without any further delay, the Committee stated that this extension should be final.

The Committee further commended the C5 Ambassadors, the AU, the IGAD and the United Nations for their continued support to the South Sudan peace process, including through the regular visits undertaken in December 2018 and May 2019.

The Independent Boundary Committee (IBC) was also commended for its meticulous work and its report was welcomed, together with the recommendations contained therein.
The Committee recognized the roles played by the AU Member States and the AU Commission in supporting the peace process in South Sudan and urged them to enhance their efforts in assisting the South Sudanese stakeholders.

Given the four months remaining into the end of the extended pre-transition period, the Committee expressed concern that a number of key tasks still remain to be addressed and accomplished, namely the issue of internal boundaries, permanent security arrangements and mobilization of the required funding for implementation of the peace agreement.

**The Committee thus agreed as follows:**

There is need to generate further impetus into the implementation of the Revitalised Agreement. In this context, this step should include immediate political engagement by C5, the IGAD and the AU with the leaders of South Sudan, particularly President Salva Kiir Mayardit and Dr. Reik Machar Teny, to impress upon them the imperative for engaging in direct talks in order for them to provide the required leadership and cohesion in the implementation process. The Committee was convinced that such an approach would inspire public confidence and facilitate reconciliation at all levels of the nation.

To further enhance its engagement, including through a visit by the C5 Foreign Ministers to South Sudan before November 2019, for consultations with the South Sudanese leaders, other stakeholders and international partners to signify the collective engagement and support of Africa to assist the peace process towards the finality of reaching a durable peace. In the same vein, the C5 Heads of State and Government could consider undertaking also a visit to South Sudan. The Committee further reiterated the necessity of AU Member States to continue providing support, in the form within their means, to the peace process in South Sudan.

To avert the risk of differences arising from contradicting positions on the number of states as raised by the IBC, the Committee agreed to engage the South Sudanese stakeholders and IGAD countries in order to facilitate a consensual agreement on this critical matter. The state building process in South Sudan remains at its youthful stage and Africa needs, using existing experiences and lessons, to provide the necessary guidance and accompaniment to ensure that this internal boundary making process leads, in the most peaceful manner, to the expected outcome.

Commended the Government of South Sudan for committing to provide 100,000,000 USD for the operationalization of the security arrangements. In this respect, the Committee further appealed to the Government for timely disbursement of the committed funds to enable effective implementation of the security arrangements.

Committed to continue engaging the international community to provide supplementary support to the efforts deployed by the Government of South Sudan.
Commended those AU Member States providing support to the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement and appealed to all other AU Member States to do the same, especially providing technical support for the cantonment, with a view to creating a unified national army to serve the interest of all the South Sudanese.

Commited to support genuine national reforms on security, including security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegratation; governance; and rule of law, among others. In this context, the Committee pronounced in favor of deploying efforts to provide, within their respective means, concrete support in kind to the operationalization of the permanent security arrangements as outlined in Chapter Two of the R-ACRSS. The Committee appealed to the wider AU Membership to also mobilize and provide support to this process.

Commenced the AU Commission for the efforts that it continues to deploy in mobilizing resources towards the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement and in promoting synergy and unity of action, amongst the various actors involved in the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement. In the same vein, the Committee stressed the need for the AU Commission to provide the necessary coordination in the delivery of support by all contributors to the implementation of the South Sudan peace process.

Agreed to submit a report to the next ordinary session of the AU Assembly to be held in January/February 2020.